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UTOPIAS;

OR,

SCHEMES OF SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT.

FROM SIR THOMAS MORE TO KARL MARX.

BY THE

REV. M. KAUFMANN, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF

"SOCIALISM; ITS NATURE, ITS DANGERS, AND ITS REMEDIES CONSIDERED."

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GONZALO. I' the commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
And use of service, none; contract, succession,
Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;
No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;
No occupation; all men idle, all;
And women too, but innocent and pure;
No sovereignty;—

* * * * *

All things in common nature should produce
Without sweat or endeavour; treason, felony,
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,
Would I not have; but nature should bring forth,
Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance,
To feed my innocent people.

* * * * *

I would with such perfection govern, sir,
To excel the golden age.

ALONSO. Prithee, no more; thou dost talk nothing to me.

Shakespeare, "*The Tempest*," Act II., Scene 1, 142–167.

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PREFACE.

THE special interest taken in the sudden development of Modern Socialism, owing to recent events in Germany, has induced the author to collect a series of papers contributed to a periodical during the current year, which have received much kind attention, into a volume. This may serve as a short and popular account of the principal socialistic schemes from the Reformation to the present day, and might not improperly be called a short History of Socialism.

Socialism is here regarded as a consecutive movement developed in the course of time, adapting itself to prevailing social conditions, and passing successively through the imaginative, the critical, and the scientific stages of an evolutionary process.

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The aim of the writer has been throughout to present the several schemes for social improvement in the light of contemporary history, to show how far they reflect the spirit of the times, and what were the causes in the condition of the people which gave rise to the Utopian speculations they contain. This has never been done before, to the writer's knowledge, at least, by any of his predecessors who have travelled over the same field. Hence there exists much unreasonable prejudice against socialistic literature, as containing nothing but idle dreams and fancies quite unworthy of the serious attention of social reformers, practical politicians, philanthropists, and the intelligent public generally. To remove such misconceptions, to awaken general interest in grave social questions of the day, and to gain a fair hearing for the propounders of social schemes who have left a mark in history, some account is given in the following pages of their more rational demands, whilst less space has been given to that portion of

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their Utopias which contained the less practical suggestions, although it has ever been the fashion to bring the latter prominently before the reader, and so to provoke ridicule and censure rather than to draw attention to social evils demanding social reforms.

Besides this intention of counteracting a dangerous tendency of disposing of Modern Socialism with a sneer, or treating its demands with callous indifference, it has also been the aim of the author to point out any good which has either directly or indirectly resulted from the influence of Socialism in promoting the welfare of the workers of society, and contributing towards the solution of some social problems past and present.

This mode of treatment will present Socialism from a novel point of view, not merely as a *mechanical* irritant, tending towards social disruption, but as a *dynamical* force in social statics, which, in conjunction with other—some counteracting—influences

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has produced a resultant in the direction of social progress.*

Little attempt has been made in the following pages to criticise systematically the Utopian schemes described, as this has been done already in another work by the same author,† where the theories of Modern Socialism are fully stated and considered on strictly economic principles.

All the best known authorities on the subject have been carefully consulted in the composition of the present volume—works on Socialism, as well as the original sources, where these have been accessible to the author. Among the authorities made use of are Reybaud, "Études sur les Réformateurs," 1864; Thonissen, "Le Socialisme," 1852; Sudré, "Histoire du Communisme," 1856; and Villegardelle,

* Cf. an article on Modern Socialism, by Mr. H. Fawcett, in "The Fortnightly Review" for November, 1878, p. 605.

† "Socialism; its Nature, its Dangers, and its Remedies Considered." C. Kegan Paul & Co.

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"Histoire des Idées Sociales," in French; Schäffle, "Kapitalismus und Socialismus," 1870; the same, New Edition, 1878, forming the third volume of the author's "Bau und Leben des Socialen Körpers;" Stein, "Der Socialismus und Communismus," 1848; Marlo, "Untersuchungen über die Organisation der Arbeit," 1850; Rossbach, "Geschichte der Gesellschaft;" R. Meyer, "Der Emancipations Kampf der Vierten Standes;" Lange, "Die Arbeiterfrage," 1875; and Mehring, "Die Deutsche Socialdemocratie," 1877; together with a number of lesser works and pamphlets, in German; also those of Booth, "Robert Owen," 1869; Sargant, "Social Innovators," 1858; Holyoake, "History of Co-operation;" and Mr. John Frost's compilation, "Social Utopias," in "Chambers's Papers for the People," in English. Among the German pamphlets may be specially mentioned those of Treitschke and Schmoller; Sybel and Scheel; Contzen, Held, and Bamberger. These are, however, only quoted

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sparingly as foot-notes where it appeared indispensable as giving force to statements in the text, or affording suggestive helps to the student of social questions.

The plan of the work is entirely the author's own, although throughout he has endeavoured to avail himself conscientiously of any materials likely to throw light upon his subject, and to present it in an acceptable form to his readers.

December, 1878.

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UTOPIAS;

OR,

SCHEMES OF SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT.

CHAPTER I.

MORE'S "UTOPIA."

WHAT is a Utopia? Strictly speaking, it means a "nowhere land," some happy island far away, where perfect social relations prevail, and human beings, living under an immaculate constitution and a faultless government, enjoy a simple and happy existence, free from the turmoil, the harassing cares, and endless worries of actual life. The world has scarcely ever been without its Utopias; there have always been the poetical thinkers and philosophical dreamers, who, when troubled by the social evils around them, or roused to indignation and pity by the crying injustice of the ruling classes, and the hopeless condition of the poor, respectively, have given vent to their feelings in those poetical fictions which, since the

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appearance of More's "Utopia," have been called "Utopian."

These ideal creations, "fancy-woven," it is true, are often more beautiful than practical. Still, it must be remembered that their object was more frequently to satirise existing social inconsistencies than to recommend the literal application of the social schemes which they contained. They aimed at social improvements and reforms by describing fictitious states of society, where the wide gulf which separates rich and poor is bridged over by means of equitable and equalising institutions, and where the unhappy consequences of egotism or private interest are prevented by legal enactments. What they all aim at is this: to provide a competency of means for the enjoyment of all, and to exact at the same time a corresponding exertion from all members of society, so as to eliminate the superfluous luxuries of rich idlers as well as the needy indigence of the respectable poor—to remove, in short, the extremes of wealth and poverty. Our labouring population are dissatisfied with their own share in the wealth of nations, and most of us at present complain of "life at high pressure," burdened as we are with the cares and anxieties attending a severe struggle for existence in this iron age of competition. Just as we chafe under this constant strain of brain and nerve, to the

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great detriment of health, comfort, and restfulness, so at all ages of the world, and in every civilised community, men, often placed under less favourable circumstances than ourselves, have given vent to their dissatisfaction with existing social arrangements. Thus the leaders of thought, the poets and philosophers of the day, gave expression to this popular discontent, and mostly in the forms of Utopias, which have appeared, therefore, under varying names at given intervals, from the remotest antiquity up to the present day. Sometimes they look backward to the past, a golden age, for social ideals; at other times (since the spread of Christianity) they look forward to a brighter coming era for the realisation of their hopes of social perfectibility, but at all times they agree in being dissatisfied with things as they are.

Great social commotions are produced by political or religious movements, and social commotions in their turn produce social theories and visions of model societies, as conceived in the brains of speculative philosophers, who, by a subtile intuition, divine what goes on in the minds of the people, and give expression to popular ideals by defining more clearly the vague socialistic tendencies of the times. For it is at such times, when the minds of men are stirred up in their deepest depths by some strong current of

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religious or political enthusiasm, that a belief, too, gains ground in many hearts as to the possibility of a more perfect social state, a hope almost amounting to assurance, that at no distant future the human family will be in a better and more satisfactory condition than in the present. Thus, three hundred and sixty years ago, shortly before the outburst of popular discontent, social, political, and religious, culminating in the Reformation, there appeared a small book, creating no little stir in the learned world of the day, the "Utopia" of Sir Thomas More, who became presently Lord Chancellor of England under King Henry VIII. In that book were reflected, in a wonderful manner, the social discontents and aspirations of the age. It has been called the only work of genius of that age in England, and its merit consisted in producing, in thoughtful and cultured language, the undefined ideas and longings of the people all over Europe. What added to the piquancy and force of the witty volume was the startling contrast between the actual unhappy state of England at the time, and the theoretical system of a perfect society which it suggested. As Mr. Green, in his admirable History of the English People, puts it, "From a world where fifteen hundred years of 'Christian' teaching had produced social injustice, religious intolerance, and political tyranny, the

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humorist philosopher turned to a 'nowhere,' in which the mere efforts of natural human virtue realised those ends of security, equality, brotherhood, and freedom, for which the very institution of society seemed to have been framed. . . . . The whole system of society around him seemed to him nothing but a conspiracy of the rich against the 'poor.' In 'Utopia' the aim of legislation is to secure the welfare—social, industrial, intellectual, religious—of the community at large, and of the labour-class, as the true basis of a well-ordered commonwealth. The end of its labour-laws was simply the welfare of the labourer." Short hours of labour, sanitary reforms, healthful recreation, popular education, just principles of penal law, religious toleration, the amity of nations—these war-cries of the social reformer in our own day are all anticipated in the social romance of Sir Thomas More.

The "Utopia" consists of two books, in the first of which we get a glimpse of the social condition of England at the time; and a dismal picture it is, from whatever point of view we regard it. Here we are brought face to face with an alarming increase of poverty and crime, chiefly brought about by the unjust abrogation of peasant proprietorship, and the conversion of arable into pasture land, which reduced the cultivators of the soil to poverty and compulsory

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idleness, also by the sudden discharge of numerous bands of soldiers at the close of the wars, and the vagabondism of a large number of retainers who found no longer any employment in the households of a nobility and gentry ruined by extravagance. Idleness and destitution fostered crime, whilst the cruel severity of the law condemned to the gallows those whom indigence had provoked to theft.

The idleness and unprincipled self-indulgence of the nobles, the corruption of the clergy, baneful monopolies, oppressive taxation, and legalised injustice, sanctioned, sometimes instituted, by royalty—all these are vividly brought before us in this first book of the "Utopia." "The rich," it says there, "are ever striving to pare away something further from the daily wages of the poor by private fraud, and even by public law, so that the wrong already existing (for it is wrong that those from whom the state derives most benefit should receive least reward) is made yet greater by means of the law of the state." A transformation scene takes place in the second book. Here we are transposed to Utopia.

In Utopia there are no rich and poor, but all share alike; and no severe laws are required, because there are no inducements to crime. The manners and the customs of the people are as refined and simple as their education and religious feelings are

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elevated and pure. There are no despotic rulers, and no cringing slaves, because, following the law of nature, the Utopians are all equal and their government elective. One man, called the Philarch, is chosen as their patriarchal chief by every group of thirty families, into which the whole country is divided, and over every ten of these Philarchs presides a person called the Proto-philarch (*i.e.* the first Philarch). A council of these, together with a senate, are annually elected, and by them conjointly again the chief magistrate is chosen for life, but removable if convicted of misconduct. There are fifty-four large and beautiful cities in the island of Utopia, and a certain proportion of land is attached to each for the cultivation of the necessities of life, and for the purpose of affording healthy recreation and change to the townsmen, who vary their urban occupation from time to time by engaging in agricultural pursuits. All the produce in town and country is disposed of by public authority, either for the immediate maintenance of the islanders, or to be stored up for future use. The hours of labour are reduced considerably, as all share in the work, and the leisure hours of the Utopians are employed in the cultivation of the arts and sciences, specially music, since intellectual pleasures are considered as the highest source of enjoyment. Finery in dress and vulgar

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display of grand furniture and equipage are out of the question, and wealth is held in utter contempt, gold being considered inferior to iron, as being less useful. Private property, movable or real, is abolished, as being a constant standing danger of re-introducing the evils attending upon inequality, where some who are least worthy may enjoy prosperity and general esteem by reason of their affluence, whilst others more deserving are left to pine in misery and contempt, despised because they happen to be poor. There can be no "land-famine" in Utopia, for lands are only held as a temporary tenure; "they count themselves rather the good husbands than the owners of their lands."

Religion is held in great respect, and the ministers of religion, chosen by the people, administer to their spiritual wants and superintend general education. Lawyers there are none, as there are no disputes about property to be settled, and war is studiously avoided, and only reluctantly entered upon in self-defence. Life thus becomes a joyous existence, undisturbed by any cares for the morrow, or overshadowed by any dark prospects of contingencies looming in the future. All is contentedness and security. Labour is easy, and rest does not weary, because the hours set apart for work are few, and the hours of idleness are spent in rational enjoyment:

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and innocent pleasure. A variety of pursuits for the cultivation of mind and heart are provided by a paternal government to remove the tedium of monotonous existence, and to lead man on to a life of virtuous happiness. In fine, simplicity of life, with a full relish of the good things of this world, purity of morals and harmony in religion prevailing in the island, promote material contentedness and intellectual enjoyment, cheerful security, and unbroken peace. Thus we find that Utopia is as different as it can be from the state of England in the time of Henry VIII.

The question arises: Did Sir T. More believe in the practicability of reforming, or rather reconstructing, society on the pattern of his own Utopia? We think not. In More's own day the Utopia was regarded rather as a mirror of political and social evils of the times than as a serious scheme for the entire transformation of society.* He himself hints at the impracticability of his own Utopian reforms, for he ends his book with the vague admission that there are many things in the Utopian commonwealth "which, in our cities, *I may rather wish for than hope*

* "In More's own day the Utopia was regarded as a mirror of the political and social evils of the times."—*J. S. Brewer*, "*Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII.*," *Vol. II. p. cclxviii.; and cf. Seebohm*, "*Oxford Reformers*" (*2nd edition*), *p.* 348.

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after." On the other hand, there can be little doubt as to his intention of suggesting in this indirect way social reforms to his royal master which, in those days of kingly despotism, it was not safe to utter in less ambiguous language. "You must," says Sir Thomas More in his "Utopia," "with a crafty, wile, and subtle tongue, study and endeavour, as much as in you lieth, to handle the matter wittily and handsomely for the purpose, and that which you cannot turn to good, so to order it that it be not very bad. For it is not possible for all things to be well unless all men were good; *which, I think, will not be yet for these many years.*"

But, under cover of a social extravaganza, the fanciful description of what appeared to him even an impossible society, he aims at possible reforms in various matters of the most important nature to the commonwealth. Such was, for example, the paramount question of land tenure, a social question as important then (if not more so) as it is now. Such, too, was the often-recurring question in social politics —how labour may be rendered more generally attractive and remunerative, and what organisation of labour is required so that all the workers of society may have their proper share in the distribution of profits and property. In answer to the former, he evidently opposed the growing tendencies

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of the times to concentrate large landed properties in a few hands, which reduced the masses of the people to poverty and dependence. As a solution to the latter question, the fair distribution of the profits of industry, he suggests a wise and equitable subdivision of labour, and, together with shortened hours, the introduction of variety in employment, and the provision for refined relaxation and mental improvement. In all this he shows himself far in advance of his own age. The division of labour such as he dreamed of has partly been realised in our factory system, but the benefits accruing to the working-man from alternate hours of labour and refreshment, of varying bodily activity and healthy mental recreation, remain still among the *desiderata* of the present day. On the other hand, the "Improvement of the Industrial Dwellings Act" within recent times may be regarded as a partial realisation of one of More's Utopian ideas. For in his towns "the streets are twenty feet broad, the houses backed by spacious gardens, and curiously builded after a gorgeous and gallant sort, with their storeys one after another."

Enough has been said of the "Utopia," and the aims and objects of its author in writing it, to lead us to the general conclusion that he was one of those noble-minded, philanthropic, social reformers who have appeared at critical periods in the history

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of mankind as severe critics of existing social evils, and as the avowed propounders of new social theories which, if they had no other merits, preserved at least society from utter stagnation, or even from retrogression, by constantly diverting the attention of mankind "to a higher destiny." Sir Thomas More has been called the father of modern Communism. A careful study of his "Utopia" does not justify the implied accusation that he himself was a Communist in our present acceptation of the term, for, as we have pointed out above, he protests against the literal application of his own ideas as expressed in the "Utopia." No one knew better than he did that his own age was not yet ripe for such thorough-going reforms, and that a commonwealth resting on Utopian principles among mortals of the ordinary type must be equally chimerical at almost any age.

In a dark and stormy period of English history, and in the midst of social surroundings of the most distressing aspect, the philosopher dreams what *might be* under different conditions, just as Plato had done before him, and French socialists like J. Simon and Fourier have done after him, placed, as they were, under similar circumstances. But events travel more slowly than the speculations of social philosophers. Their ideas, conceived with the quick intuition of genius, require ages of patient work and waiting for

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their ultimate realisation. A great deal has been already accomplished which had only been a dim vision of the future even to Plato, More, and Fourier. Much remains yet unaccomplished. But what has been already attained that seemed impossible of attainment to the men of a past age may be regarded as an earnest of social progress in the future. At all events, we cannot withhold our gratitude and respect from such noble-minded and large-hearted pioneers of social reforms, who have faithfully expressed in their writings the irrepressible hopes and aspirations of humanity after a social ideal, and whose force of genius and character has done so much towards improving and ameliorating the condition of the people.

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CHAPTER II.

BACON'S "NEW ATLANTIS" AND CAMPANELLA'S "CITY OF THE SUN."

MORE than a century had passed away since the appearance of More's "Utopia." The religious ferment produced by the Reformation movement had begun to show signs of abatement, when another movement closely connected with it made its appearance almost at the same time in England and Italy, namely, the rise of a new philosophy. A small body of original thinkers rose up, who, breaking loose from the old methods of scientific inquiry, sought out new paths for discovering the laws of nature, and in so doing to ameliorate the social condition of mankind.

Lord Bacon and the Dominican friar Campanella were both deeply interested in this powerful intellectual movement; they were both influenced by the

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teachings of a common master, Teleso, one of the "novi homines" whose avowed aim it was to destroy the authority of Aristotle, the "tyrant of souls," and to free the human mind from intellectual shackles, just as the Reformers had endeavoured to free mankind from spiritual thraldom.

By education and early associations, as well as in their subsequent experiences, no two men could differ from each other more widely than Lord Bacon and Thomas Campanella. Whilst the latter was wasting his early life in a cloister, the former was qualifying for a successful career at the bar; whilst the Italian was in prison for the next twenty-seven years of his life on account of his political and religious convictions, the Englishman was gradually rising into fame and political power; and whereas Campanella died at last in comparative obscurity, scarcely remembered in our own day, though once the forerunner of a great scientific revolution, Lord Bacon is still revered as the man whose appearance marked an epoch in scientific history. Yet both these men, in spite of these differences of position and fortune, were inspired by the same ideas, they both expected identical results of a stupendous nature from the progress of natural science in the improvement of our race.

The social surroundings of the Calabrian monk were by no means of an encouraging character. He

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lived among a people enervated by political corruption and in the last stage of national decrepitude.

The people is a beast of muddy brain,

he says, in one of his celebrated sonnets, disgusted as he was with their apathy for social improvement and their impervious indifference to new ideas. No small amount of faith in his own mission was, therefore, necessary for Campanella to take upon himself the "Philosophical and Social Apostolate," and, in spite of persecution, imprisonment, and torture, to persevere in his belief in the final triumph of good, and a golden age to be brought about by equality and brotherly love.

Bacon was more fortunate in his personal experiences. Living in one of the most flourishing periods of English history, in the midst of national prosperity and intellectual progress, he was buoyed up not only by an inner consciousness of power, but by external surroundings. The unparalleled triumphs of the age of Elizabeth gave an impulse to the sanguine hopes in the progress of mankind contained in the "New Atlantis."

There was one point in which the history of these two great men coincided. They both were born in an age of discovery. The invention of printing, with its wider diffusion of knowledge and culture; the

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discovery of America and a new passage to the East Indies, with the consequent influx of wealth and luxury; the further spread of commerce, exciting the spirit of inquiry and adventure, and with it unbounded desires and longings: all these aided in opening new prospects to aspiring humanity, and could not fail to produce profound impressions on such minds as that of Bacon, "the most sagacious of mankind," and that of Campanella, the friend of Galileo. Both were gifted with scientific tact along with imaginative genius, both were inspired with the enthusiasm of scientific reform and social ideals, hence both produced similar Utopias.

The scheme for social improvement as conceived in the brain of the Dominican friar differs in many respects from that of the eminent Englishman, but the "New Atlantis," as well as the "Civitas solis," may be called prophecies of social improvement, as the effects of the advancement of learning, the one under an enlightened hierarchy, the other under perfect monarchical institutions.

Of Lord Bacon, it has been said that he thought in the manner of artists and poets, and speaks after the manner of prophets and seers. We may see this verified in the "New Atlantis," which we must now proceed to consider in its general outlines.

In this fragment of Bacon's social philosophy we

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have indications of the manner in which he thought it possible to improve the social condition of our race by means of enriching mankind with new discoveries and additional resources, and by means of which he sought to promote the contentment and happiness of man by fitting him out with a complete equipment of instruments and powers for the entire conquest of nature.

The "New Atlantis" was written in its present incomplete form in 1624, and published three years later, with the author's approbation. It embodies Bacon's visions of the future, and is remarkable not only as a philosophical speculation or scientific romance, but as being the outcome of sane reflection, containing but few, if any, of those chimerical extravagancies to be found in other Utopias. In the description of the conditions of mankind here we have nothing but the practical results he anticipated from a diligent and systematic study of nature according to his own principles.* In the prospect opened in the "New Atlantis" there is nothing impossible to Bacon's own mind, and what he there describes in the "House of Solomon" he believes to be realisable at no very distant future.

The religion of this imaginary island, like that of

* See Hallam's "Lit. History," vol. iii. p. 103.

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More's Utopia, is tolerant and humane; it inculcates the amity of nations, kindness and compassion towards the alien and distressed. One of the sages of the "New Atlantis," receiving strangers from afar, rejoices to find them not indifferent to religious inquiries. "Ye knit my heart to you," he says, "by asking this question in the first place; for it showeth that you first seek the kingdom of heaven."

In politics we are told the king had "a large heart, inscrutable for good, and was wholly bent to make his kingdom and people happy." The islanders find seclusion from the rest of the world conducive to the public welfare, "doubting novelties and commixture of manners." Their country being an island of large extent, of rare fertility of soil, and extensive shipping, they are comparatively independent of foreigners. Still voyages are undertaken by ambassadors selected for that purpose, to keep the inhabitants of the "New Atlantis" informed of all the discoveries and improvements in foreign lands.

"Solomon's House" * (of the description of which Lord Macaulay says "that there is not to be found in any human composition a passage more eminently

* Some think that in the name of Solomon some flattering allusion is here intended to James I. on his elevation to the throne of England.

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distinguished by profound and serene wisdom") is the "lanthorn" of the kingdom; "it is dedicated to the study of the works and creatures of God." It is a sort of national museum and laboratory for the discovery of "the true nature of things." The main object of its foundation is "the knowledge of causes, and secret motion of things; and the enlarging of the bands of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible." Hence it must contain all instruments for the observation of natural phenomena and new discoveries, in order to the conquest of natural obstacles standing in the way of human happiness. It must furnish, moreover, the means for preserving and prolonging life, and the undisturbed enjoyment of existence. There are observatories, engine-houses, even "wildfires under water" (torpedoes), and there "we imitate the flight of the birds" (balloons). Men are appointed to various offices of research and the collection of facts, as well as "mystery men," for the study of scientific principles and their practical application, pioneers and miners to make new experiments, compilers of statistics and others to "cast about how to draw out of them things of use and practice for man's life," until we finally come to the class called "interpreters of nature," who codify the results of discovery and observation with axioms and aphorisms for the future guidance of mankind to pro-

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vide against maladies and misfortunes arising from natural causes.

Nor is the search after "more light" disassociated in the "New Atlantis" from the practice of virtue. As to morality, "it is the virgin of the world. Self-respect is the spring of their virtue; therefore the reverence of a man's self is next to religion the chiefest bridle of all vices."

Further, this search after goodness and truth does not interfere with a joyous mode of living our life here below. On the contrary, the simplicity and serenity of patriarchal life on scientific principles gives completeness to the home, and the cheerfulness of well-regulated households on a large scale is increased by occasional feasts and family gatherings, accompanied by interesting and instructive ceremonies, closing with "music and dances, and other recreations after their manner."

In short, Bacon expects a startling revolution in the course of human affairs in consequence of a wider spread of scientific knowledge; he anticipates a new heaven and a new earth from a wider diffusion of the knowledge of natural laws. More had seen in the revival of classical learning and in the dawn of the Reformation a promise of social improvement among the people. Bacon, a century later, saw in the revival of scientific inquiry, and in the rise of his own

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experimental philosophy, the promise of amelioration in the physical and moral condition of mankind.

Thus we see how the mind of man cannot rest satisfied with existing arrangements, but soars after a higher social ideal when it feels itself lifted out of its ordinary level in the lower regions of custom and conventionality. The occasion is given by some mighty current of thought or feeling passing through masses of men periodically. Sometimes it is the outburst of a religious reformation, at other times the revival of the old learning, and then again the renewed spirit of research inquiring into the hidden laws of nature. The movement is set going, and men like Bacon partly describe and partly direct its course, and prophetically point to its goal. Nor are the ideal speculations of Bacon, bold and original as they were, impracticable. "Already," says Macaulay, "some parts, and not the least startling parts, of the glorious prophecy have been accomplished, even according to the letter, and the whole, construed according to the spirit, is daily accomplishing all around us."

It has been asked, "Could this confident hope in the immense expansions of human power, the grand idea of man's universal conquest over nature and over obstacles placed by himself in the way of his own unlimited increase in well-being and happiness,

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have germinated, grown, and occupied any one's mind entirely in times of discouragement and decay, in times of ecclesiastical and political tyranny, discouraging freedom of thought and intellectual effort?"*

The work of Thomas Campanella, entitled the "City of the Sun," is a complete reply to this question. It appeared in 1637, or thirteen years after Bacon's "New Atlantis." Campanella himself was born in Stilo, in Calabria, in the year of the building of the Royal Exchange, in London, by Sir Thomas Gresham, the royal merchant, an event which indicates the commercial prosperity of this country at a time when Italy, "sunk in sloth, priest-ridden, tyrant-ridden, exhausted with the unparalleled activity of the renaissance, besotted with the vices of slavery and slow corruption, gave no ears to these prophets of the future, the heralds of modern philosophy and modern ideas of freedom."

Thus it happened that "the dulcet sounds of phantasy" from the pen of the philosopher of Stilo had no charm for his countrymen. Nevertheless, he would not be silent. He took for his motto "Non tacebo," and for his device a bell, to indicate his mission of sounding the alarm in the ears of those who

* Taine's "English Literature," vol. i. p. 218.

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would not hear. And what was the burden of his cry?

It was social reform—nay, more, it was an entire social revolution, a demand for a new state of society altogether, as described in the "City of the Sun."

The proposals for social improvement are such as may be expected from a man whose experience of life had been gathered within the narrow confines of a monastery under strict Dominican discipline, and who aims at social improvements by committing the fate of mankind to an ecclesiastical hierarchy acting according to scientific principles. In Campanella the man of science and the Church disciplinarian meet. His Utopia is a land where the happiness of the community is brought about by a strict application of scientific rigour under ecclesiastical authority, to the conduct of government.

In his social scheme, which has been called a "phantastic creation full of originality," he presents us with the picture of an ideal society where everything is ordered according to monastic rule, where life, with its alternate occupations and enjoyments, is regulated by semi-ecclesiastical and semi-philosophical superiors.

The supreme head of this communistic state is the so-called "Grand Metaphysician," who is to be the most eminent man of science, and his subordinates

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are chosen equally on account of their mental and moral qualifications, as in China the mandarins or high state officials are appointed by means of competitive examinations to test their capacity. The ministers of state in the "Civitas solis" are a triumvirate of moral magnates, who bear, by way of indication of their peculiar qualities, the names of Power, Wisdom, and Love respectively. To them is committed the charge of warlike preparations, public instruction, and the material welfare of the citizens. They, again, are assisted in performing their several functions by minor officials, who, by reason of personal merit, constitute representatives of special virtues, from which they receive their respective names, such as Magnanimity, Courage, Justice, Truth, Moderation, &c. &c. In fact, the ruling powers, from the "Grand Metaphysician," who is a sort of industrial Pope, down to the lowest officers in the series, represent ideas, and form an infallible hierarchy, ruling with wisdom and unlimited power a commonwealth of equals, and endeavouring to promote truth and virtue. They have power over life and death, and may inflict the most severe punishments in case of minor offences, even corporal chastisement, where that seems necessary. In the choice of magistrates and other ministers of justice special regard is paid to personal distinction in the arts of peace and the mechanical sciences.

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Those who are the greatest adepts in business, and are engaged in the most varied industries, become leaders and masters, and receive the greatest consideration.

In the "City of the Sun" people ridicule our contempt for the artisan class, as well as our overweening regard for those who are not engaged in any of the bread-winning pursuits. On the contrary, they rather despise those who live in idleness and keep a large retinue of servants to minister to their indolence and self-indulgence.

All property is held in common, and extends to all the relations of life. There are no private fortunes or homes. "The principle of property," says Campanella, "does not grow up within us naturally. It arises from the fact that we have our own homes and families. Hence egoism; for to raise one son in particular to dignities and wealth, and making him the heir of a large fortune, is weakening the public treasury, and enables one set of men to rule over another by means of their wealth and power. Again, those who are powerless, poor, or of low origin, are in danger of becoming avaricious, mean, and hypocritical."

There are public buildings in which all live together, partaking of common meals in halls provided for that purpose, and sleeping in common dormitories.

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Every townland has its own public kitchen, dining-rooms, granaries, and provision-magazines. Here everybody receives according to his requirements, with due regard to the ruling principles of the community—"plain living and hard thinking."

Education—literary, scientific, and technical—is common to all without distinction. Even women are brought up exactly like men. But in the apportioning of work the rough occupations are assigned to the latter, and labour requiring less exertion is assigned to the former. The most hard-working trades are held in highest esteem, and agricultural labourers proceed to their daily task in solemn procession.

Four hours of daily work, from which none are exempt, suffice for obtaining the requisites for all the members in the community. This shortening of the labour-hours has the effect of making everybody perform their task cheerfully, and so becoming most productive members of society. All work is done in groups, headed by the best workers, who become the leading kings or fathers of their companies. Commerce is despised, and may not be carried on within the walls of the city, for fear of corrupting the citizens; money is only used in transacting business with outsiders.

Campanella was aware of the difficulty of carrying

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out his own scheme of social economy, as will appear from the following short extract taken from his work, the "City of the Sun," which, similar to the "Utopia," is written in the form of a dialogue, between an imaginary Grand Hospitaller and a Genovese Captain:

Grand Hospitaller. "But in such a state of things no one would work, since everybody would depend on the labour of the rest for his own maintenance, as Aristotle has already objected to Plato's scheme."

Genovese Captain. "I cannot well continue this discussion, having never learnt to argue. I only assure you that the patriotism of these people is beyond all conception, and do we not know from history that the Romans despised property in proportion to their devotion to their country?"

Thus we see how Campanella tries to solve the most difficult problem of Communism by replying that people will work in the absence of selfish motives from a strong sentiment of duty and devotion to the common welfare. This argument has since become the corner-stone of successive plans of new social edifices on a communistic basis. It resolves the ancient principle that the individual must be sacrificed to the species, the person to the commonwealth, with the modern principle of voluntary self-abnegation for the public good.

Campanella had been brought up in a monastery,

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and had seen in early life but little of the outer world. We must not, therefore, be astonished at his simplicity in believing that such motives are sufficiently powerful in human nature to serve as the sole basis of social organisation and the maintenance of social order. That he had some misgivings as to the successful working of his scheme is shown by the fact of his prescribing such heavy pains and penalties in case of disobedience or dereliction of duty among the members of the commonwealth.

It is not at all unlikely, however, that he looked forward confidently to a time when, with the spread of education and enlightenment, a higher standard of morals would be created, in which the principle of fear would disappear, and voluntary devotedness to the common welfare would gain the victory over selfishness and self-seeking, and so render his scheme practical.

To be able to raise himself amid the most depressing influences around him to such a high level of moral elevation and aspiring hope, stamps Campanella as a master-mind in his own day, as a genius worthy to stand by the side of the great pioneers of truth of that remarkable age, not only on account of his eminent philosophical attainments, but also, and chiefly, as the propounder of a new "terrestrial economy," founded on a superior moral basis.

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If the "disciplined imagination" of Bacon afforded that great man a Pisgah-view of a society in the distant future, when his own new philosophy should have been utilised for the material improvement and moral elevation of mankind, the poetic passion of Campanella, on the other hand, opened out to him at least an equally grand prospect of a society in the future, where unselfishness and patriotic devotion would make use of the acquired knowledge and power in the cause of moral and material progress.

In the social speculations of both these great men we see, as in the case of the "Utopia," the spirit of the times reflected. Here, again, we notice the same longing after a higher social ideal which haunts the human mind from age to age. Sometimes we see depicted in these Utopias, as it were, the throbbings of the *heart* of humanity in the midst of great social distress; at other times we notice the rebellion of the *mind* of man against prevailing social incongruities that are no longer reconcilable with increased prosperity and enlightenment. At all times, under varying modes of expression and forms of speech, the undying principle reasserts itself—and never, be it noticed, without some result—in the strong, irrepressible cry for social improvement among the masses and their leaders.

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CHAPTER III.

MORELLY'S "BASILIADE" AND BABEUF'S "SOCIETY OF EQUALS."

WE have seen already how the Protestant Reformation and the revival of learning gave rise to several Utopias. We now proceed to consider those Utopias which owed their origin to the three revolutionary waves that have passed over France in 1789, 1830, and 1848 successively, leaving their indelible impression on the social and political institutions of almost every country in Europe. In Morelly's "Basiliade" we have one of the earliest indications of the socialistic tendencies which characterised the first revolution. In Babeuf's schemes of social improvement, and his sublime failure when attempting to carry them into practice, we have the final and disappointing result of that mighty social upheaval. Morelly and Babeuf alike express in their social schemes the main object of the revolu-

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tionary movement—*i.e.* the establishment of a social republic on the principle of pure equality.

In order to understand the full meaning of these social schemes, we must take a hasty glance of society at the time.

The spread of enlightenment dating from the Reformation, the further extension of civilisation, and the democratic temper among the people, produced at last a collision between them and the privileged orders of society. The miserable condition of the labouring classes, ground down by unjust burdens and heavy taxation, aggravated by intolerable abuses of power on the part of the aristocracy and the clergy, provoked a social revolt against the existing order of things. The diffusion of new ideas among the educated, moreover, had produced the spiritual insubordination and audacious rebellion of the human mind against accepted notions affecting rights of property and class privileges. The demand for total emancipation of the masses from social, religious, and intellectual bondage, made by the leading philosophers, found an echo among thousands of the common people. The upper classes, corrupted by effeminate indulgence, reduced to a set of "gaudy dancing marionettes," were as ignorant of the danger of their position as they were impotent of averting their own doom. Alienated from the people by permanent

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absenteeism from their estates, known only by the cruelty of exactions levied on their behalf by grasping middle-men, they failed to perceive the rising discontent of the masses and the urgent need for social reform until it was too late. Thus, when social distress brought about excessive social pressure, famine and distress produced at last, when the people were no longer able or willing to bear it, a social revolution.

Long before the outbreak of this revolution, a small but noble band of philanthropic thinkers and statesmen had endeavoured, by their writings and policy, to avert the catastrophe. Morelly was one of these. As we have seen before, the seething and fermenting of popular discontent reflected, and the popular hopes of a better future expressed, in the Utopias of a few thinking men who caught the spirit of the age, although far in advance of it; so here again, in Morelly's "Basiliade," we see not only the author's play of fancy in describing an ideal community and his veiled irony directed against existing social abuses, but we see, as it were in dim outline, the faint hopes of the people in the midst of their distress, and their growing desire for a return to a more simple state of society which was supposed to have prevailed at the first when all men were equal.

In Morelly we have the ideas of Sir Thomas More

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and Campanella more fully developed. Here we have the theory of Communism dogmatically and systematically propounded. Difficulties and objections against their Utopian schemes which his predecessors had contented themselves in simply noticing are met and vigorously repelled by argument or passionate disdain in Morelly's writings.

Little is known of the author's personal history except that he belonged to a family gifted with some considerable talent. His father was a man of a very peculiar turn of mind and the author of several works, all remarkable for their quaint titles. Morelly, too, seems to have had a share of this peculiar family trait, a love for the paradoxical, for we find him speak of his own book as a work "original both as to its subject-matter and style, in which truth is presented to the reader with all the graces of poetry."

The idea of the "Basiliade" was taken, it is supposed, from the account given by Gregory Nazianzen of a famous charitable institution as large as a town, founded by Basilius of Cæsarea, and named after him Basilias.

The "Basiliade" was published in 1753 in the form of a prose-poem, which gives the imaginary history of a people who, after having divested themselves of all the prejudices of civilisation, find their complete satisfaction in returning to a state of nature.

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Some unfavourable criticisms provoked the author to put forth another book, the "Code of Nature," to indicate the principles on which the "Basiliade" is founded. It contains a most complete and scientific account of Morelly's social theories, and from it, as well as from the original work, we shall give now a few extracts to illustrate his complete scheme of social improvement.

His first principles of social philosophy are the native goodness of man, and the perfectibility of society. He starts with the startling assertion that man is virtuous by nature, and that society, but for the blundering of lawgivers, might be altogether perfect. The corruption of man originated in the institution of private property and its protection by law. Left to his own instincts and innate love for his fellows, man might have been happy and contented. Now, on the contrary, he is miserable and bad because moralists and legislators have made him so. They have deadened his holy passion for the welfare of others, and taught him a cold calculating selfishness in its place. "Private property," he says in the "Basiliade," "is the mother of all crimes; the children of misfortune and despair, the victims of appalling indigence, owe their origin to her. The law inflicts penalties on the unfortunate and spares the guilty, palliating deadly crimes of some and visiting the

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offences of others without providing the means that would render transgression impossible."

"The only vice in the universe," says again Morelly, in the "Code of Nature," "is avarice. All the others, whatever be their name, are only different modifications of this vice. . . . . Analyse vanity, absurdity, pride, ambition, imposture, hypocrisy, and rascality; examine greater part of our pretended virtues; all resolve themselves into that subtile and pernicious primary element, the desire to possess; you may even discover it in the very heart of disinterestedness." And presently he comes to the conclusion that private interest is the "universal pest, the slow fever, the consumptive disease of society."

It must be remembered that some of the most crying abuses of hereditary rights and legalised oppression were before Morelly's eyes when he wrote all this. He saw the bad effects produced by anomalous privileges of large landed proprietors who had clean forgotten that property has its duties as well as its privileges. He beheld with contempt worthless nobles pensioned by the king at the expense of a half-starved people compelled to live on "meal-husks and boiled grass," so that their masters might squander fortunes in profligacy and frivolous display.

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As a remedial measure for curing social abuses of this kind, and worse than these, Morelly recommends absolute community of goods, and an undeviating uniformity of personal rights among all citizens.

In his proposed commonwealth all will have an equal share of work according to personal capacity, the central authority apportioning the amount of necessary commodities for consumption to every individual in the community. No inequalities are permitted, and the storing up of superfluities is strictly forbidden. The strong are to come to the rescue of the weak, and thus, by a mutual exchange of services and kind offices among the different members of the commonwealth, a balance of equal prosperity is to be maintained.

At a time when France, to use M. Taine's simile, resembled a vast stable, where thoroughbred horses had double and treble rations for being idle, whilst the common drawing-horses did the work for half rations, which were not always forthcoming—that is, to use plain language, in a state of society where a small minority of nobles consumed the fat of the land, languishing about the court, or serving as "ornamental figures" in the *salons* of Paris, whilst one tithe of the population was reduced to beggary, and the people were "murdered" by heavy burdens, fiscal oppression, and private spoliation, Morelly, in

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his "Basiliade," demands the abolition of the laws sanctioning such "a monstrous division of the products of nature."

In their place he proclaims his three fundamental laws as the basis for regenerating society:

(1) Nothing in society shall belong to anyone in particular, nor be the private property of any person, except such things as shall be required for actual use, either in supplying personal wants, or creating immediate pleasure, or what may be wanted for daily labour.

(2) Every citizen shall be regarded as a public person, supported and maintained at the public expense.

(3) Every citizen shall contribute his share towards what is necessary for the public good, according to his strength, talent, and age. For this purpose his duties shall be regulated in conformity with the laws of distribution.

Again, in a country, where the brutalised condition of the people had been described in the following weird manner by the satirist—

There are certain wild animals, male and female, scattered over the fields, some black, some brown, almost naked and sunburned. They are stooping to the ground and dig and burrow with unremitted labour. They possess something like a human voice, and when they look up they appear to have a human expression. In fact they are human beings. By night

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they return to their caves, and there live on black bread, water, and roots—

in such a country Morelly suggests a progressive system of education, primary, technical, and philosophical, to rescue the masses from this state of animal degradation, and to secure for them a proper share of physical and intellectual enjoyment.

By means of uniform education Morelly intends to lay the foundation for intellectual equality. Hence the children, after the fifth year, are removed from home and educated in public. From their tenth year they are taught their respective trades in the public workshops, and at the same time they receive instruction in the sciences, pure and applied. With the twentieth year begins the agricultural training, a course of education extending over five years, at the expiration of which they are supposed to have attained the age of maturity, when they are admitted to all the privileges of citizenship.

Thus prepared for life, they now join groups of a thousand each, forming industrial sections under the leadership of elders.

To secure perfect political equality, the government is conducted in the following manner:

There are subdivisions of families, clans, towns, and provinces. The heads of families become, in their turn, heads of the clans, and then again presi-

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dents of the senates, which constitute the highest urban authorities. These again select out of their number members in rotation who form the supreme authority of the commonwealth—*i.e.* the senate of the nation. Only older citizens are eligible for these posts in the legislative and executive government. Those under fifty have the right to meet in public, but only for consultative purposes. Like Campanella, Morelly has recourse to severe penal laws to enforce the due performance of social obligations where moral sentiments—on which, inconsistently enough, he relies so much—are not sufficiently developed to secure good and useful citizenship. At the same time he indulges in the hope that a fuller appreciation of all the "moral maxims, precepts, and reflections will tend towards cultivating social affection" and reciprocal kindness. With the spread of these and the growing ardour for work he trusts that idleness and selfishness will gradually disappear, and all will joyfully labour together for the common good of all. His last address to Humanity is a fervid exhortation to this effect:

> And thou, Humanity, be now free and rest at ease. Be for the future one united body, closely joined together by perfect unanimity. Let all varieties of desire, sentiment, and inclination be concentred in one united will, which shall direct the efforts of all mankind towards one single end, the common welfare. As light sheds its rays equally upon all, so let

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happiness be equably diffused over all. . . . . Let myriads of active hands heap up in thy common treasure-house the fruits of abundance and the uncounted products of universal industry, adding, without ceasing, more than ever the needs of nature shall be able to exhaust. Then, oh Humanity! thou shalt no more be subject to uncertainty, made uneasy by unwise thoughts, nor beset by a multitude of foolish prejudices, no longer restrained tyrannically from following thine own light in admitting or conciliating revolting contrarieties. . . . . Henceforth let there be mutual love and support, as among the sons of the same common father! Touched by reciprocal affection, will they ignore Him who is the first cause?

Morelly led the way, and Rousseau, the "Evangelist of the Revolution," with others, followed in stimulating the hope and preaching the doctrine of equality. They did so with the zeal of religious enthusiasts. They succeeded in their endeavours because the artificial state of French society, retaining all the abuses of feudalism with none of its former blessings, made men, oppressed and famishing, listen with eagerness to missionaries who preached a return to the natural state of man, in which the lower orders had not yet become the prey of a grasping nobility and a corrupt court.

A comparatively short interval separates Morelly from Rousseau, but the march of events and ideas had been rapid during this short period. Hence the intensified manner of Rousseau's declamation against property. He outruns Morelly in the thoroughness of his anti-social conclusions, and laying aside

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impatiently the guise of philosophical romance, he gives expression to his social theories in passionate and uncompromising language, appealing eloquently and persuasively to the philosophical sentimentalism of the higher classes, and the growing impatience for change among the poor. Property, he argued, was the grand abuse which had ruined mankind. "The first who says 'This field is mine,' introduces into society the germ of all calamities." "The fruits belong to all, the earth to no one."

These and similar ideas inspired, twenty years later, the leaders of the Revolution. The connecting link between Rousseau and the leaders of socialistic legislation in the Convention, as has been pointed out by Mr. J. Morley, is Mably, who in his most important work, published in 1776, gives utterance to the following:

"It is to equality that nature has attached the preservation of our social faculties and happiness; and from this I conclude that legislation will only be taking useless trouble, unless all its attention is first of all directed to the establishment of equality in the fortune and condition of citizens. What miserable folly that persons who pass for philosophers should go on repeating one after another that without property there can be no society. Let us leave illusion. It is property that divides us into two classes, rich

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and poor; the first will always prefer their fortune to that of the state, while the second will never love a government or laws that leave them in misery."*

Mirabeau and Robespierre, especially the latter, thought that the Revolution ought to change altogether the moral and *material* condition of the labouring classes, and declared, "*La guerre aux riches*,"† and the necessity of equality of fortune by means of legislation.

Not only the common people but legislators were captivated by the same delusive hopes of societary reform by the removal of all class distinctions and the abolition of class privileges. The complete dissolution of society followed. A series of insurrectionary movements led up to the Reign of Terror, which left society in a state of utter prostration, bleeding from a thousand wounds.

But "the fire and passion, the rage and tears, the many-tinted dawn and the blood-red sunset of the French Revolution," left the people in very much the same miserable condition in which it found them. Almost the prediction of Verginaud had been fulfilled, that the equality resulting from all the preceding bitter struggles would be nothing but an equality of poverty and wretchedness.

* John Morley's "Rousseau," vol. i. p. 191.

† Sudré, "Histoire du Communisme," p. 258, *et seq.* (5e éd.).

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"The Pentecostal night" of the 4th August, 1789, saw "the rights of man" accepted and promulgated by the legislation, tithes and seigneurial dues abolished, and feudalism receiving its death-blow. Now the Revolution predicted by Morelly and dimly foreseen by Rousseau was complete. Still the people's condition remained unimproved. Many of the rich had become poor; few of the poor had become less poor, but some more wretched than before it. A feeling of utter disappointment and angry despair passed through the ranks of the people. Then one man appeared, undaunted by the ghastly spectacle around him and the sad experiences of the past; he preached anew the doctrine of the equality of all men and its reception as the only means of saving expiring society. This man was the conspirator Babeuf.

Having, in conjunction with other Jacobin confederates, elaborated his societary schemes of improvement in prison, he presently, on being liberated, set forth his doctrines with energy and zeal in the assemblies of the Pantheon Club and in his organ, called "The Tribune of the People." A society was formed, called "The Society of Equals," whose avowed principle was the destruction of social arrangements and the introduction of Communism. By order of the "Directory," the society was suppressed, and became henceforth a secret conspiracy. It continued

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to issue its publications and manifestoes, and from these may be gathered the substance of Babeuf's scheme for the reconstruction of society.

In answer to a decree of the Convention which was to secure the maintenance of private property, the Babouvists declared on their part "that the abolition of inequality is the duty of every virtuous legislator." The individual is bound to abdicate his rights in favour of the community, which in turn is bound to provide for the personal well-being of all the citizens.

Babeuf issued a series of decrees accordingly, for the purpose of introducing Communism *gradually*. The public funds thus accumulating were to form a common treasury. All citizens were to work for society in proportion to their respective capacities. The citizens are formed into communes, and these subdivided into classes according to the various branches of productive labour. Every class has its own superintendent chosen by themselves; every commune has its council, consisting of delegates elected by the classes. This council assigns to every member his functions in the commune, and executes the orders of the central authority.

The land is divided into circuits and provinces, with their respective governments. The direction of the production and distribution of commodities rests

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in the same hands, as well as the contingent removal of citizens from place to place, according to the requirements of the several districts, and the special qualifications of the men themselves. All productions of labour are stored up in public magazines, where they are received by the consumers. The state trades with foreign countries, and erects storehouses on the frontier for this purpose. The surplus products of the soil and manufacture are kept in reserve for times of need. The normal quantity of labour exacted from all is fixed by law, and over-exertion is studiously avoided. The citizens live in villages, as the crowding together of large bodies of men in towns is detrimental to health and morals. Comfortable dwelling-houses, and clothing of similar make and shape, are provided for all. Food is frugal; luxuries are stringently excluded. Agriculture is the common pursuit of all, but industrial pursuits are restricted to such as have special aptitude for them. Inland commerce is strictly forbidden as inconsistent with Communistic principles. All literary productions undergo careful examination before they are printed and published. Education is simple, universal, and the children are removed from their homes at an early age so as to prevent incipient inequalities.

Such was to be the Society of Equals as projected by Babeuf. His proposals were met by a death-

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warrant of the authorities. He died on the scaffold with these words on his lips: "I wrap myself into a virtuous slumber."

In this "Aftermath" of the French Revolution we have the last and not ignoble attempt to convert the several Utopian theories into effective realities. Babeuf's socialistic scheme, honestly conceived and boldly propounded, failed, as did the social revolution to which it owed its origin. And why? Because the theories as to man's perfect equality and innate goodness on which they rested were untrue. But what was true in the principles of 1789 has survived, notwithstanding the "grosser disappointments of which the first French Revolution was so fertile." They have leavened society, reappearing with every new revival of social ideals. But when, after a period of hopeless dejection, these aspirings of humanity rose upon the surface once more, they did so under totally changed conditions.

A revolution had taken place in the mind of Europe. The civilised world had received two great lessons, taught by the French Revolution, which have never since been effaced from human memory, viz. (1) the dignity of manhood, from which flow the equal rights of all in the eyes of the law; and (2) the humane spirit of common brotherhood, or the love of mankind, from which is derived the general principle

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of co-operation which seeks the happiness of the individual in the general happiness of the community, and the national welfare of peoples in the international welfare of united humanity, the principle expressed in the lines of Wordsworth—

> Henceforth, whatever is wanting to yourselves
> In others ye shall promptly find—and all
> Enriched by mutual and reflected wealth,
> Shall with one heart honour their common kind.

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CHAPTER IV.

ST. SIMON AND ST. SIMONISM.

In the last chapter we saw how the Revolution, although removing every vestige of feudal abuses, left the position of the people, nevertheless, materially unimproved. Subsequent events were no less unfavourable to the popular cause. Under Napoleon and the restored monarchy, the security of private property and freedom of trade encouraged, indeed, the accumulation of large savings and the gradual growth, in wealth and importance, of the rising middle-class. But their prosperity only afforded a painful contrast to the prevalence of general penury around them. So far from helping, it rather hindered the progress in outward affluence among the working people.

The powerful impulse given to industry by the spread of economic science and the application of steam heightened the process of production and

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influenced a considerable number of people from the country districts, impoverished by extreme subdivision of land and the imposition of a heavy land-tax, to seek employment in the manufacturing towns. Over-population ensued, and with it a severe depression of wages, owing to the excessive competition of unemployed "hands." Left entirely at the mercy of their employers, the working classes, unable to cope with the difficulties of their new position, or to maintain their independence in the severe struggle for existence, found out that, after all, they had only changed one set of relentless taskmasters for another —the wealthy capitalist taking the place of the feudal lord—and that the rights procured by the Revolutionary struggle only amounted to a liberty of the rich to fleece the poor, and that under shelter of the abstract law of political, as distinguished from social, equality. A feeling of dissatisfaction and growing class-antagonism was the result of this state of things, and brought about, in a measure, the social movement which culminated in the Revolution of 1830. For, although that movement may be regarded as a victory of the rising Plutocracy,* over the Crown, it was the

* *Plutocracy* is the term applied to the wealthy class of merchants and speculators; *Proletarians* are the labouring classes. These terms will be often used in our subsequent discussions, and play an important part in the history of modern social schemes of improvement.

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discontent and zeal of ignorance on the part of the Proletarians which seconded the liberal opposition in their revolutionary attempt. The cry of the former was for political freedom; the demand of the latter—"work and bread!"*

Long before the outbreak of the Revolution, the sufferings of the people had been watched with keen sympathy by social reformers, whom we see rise once more on the surface, during this great crisis, to become, as on former occasions, the exponents of popular grievances and the propounders of schemes of social improvement.

St. Simon, who died five years before, and Fourier, who died seven years after the Revolution of July, are on this occasion the chief advocates of popular rights. Starting with the principle that "every man may be considered as a member of a company of workers," and that it is the object of society to extract from the earth the greatest amount of natural produce for the common happiness of man, they insist upon a more equitable distribution of work and enjoyment, and want to remove the existing distinction between producers and non-producers. They

* "Their distress had, towards the latter years of the Restoration, come to be such, that a convulsion of some sort was almost unavoidable."—Alison's "Hist. of Europe," 1815–1852, vol. iii. p. 575; lib. ed. of 1854.

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wish to make nature subservient to man instead of making one class of men subservient to another class of men, resulting in the subjection of the workers to the idlers of society.

Not satisfied with the fiction of personal liberty, they peremptorily demand a change in the social status of their clients. They are called "Socialists" because their proposals affect the well-being of the social body. They attach little or no importance to political reforms, but their chief aim is the removal of the gulf existing between rich and poor throughout the industrial system. They differ from Communists in not requiring perfect equality nor circumscribing individual liberty, and therefore in their schemes we shall not find the same eager desire of reducing all conditions of men to the same level of monotonous uniformity nor the same strict regulation of a central authority to carry out this plan of undeviating equalisation.

The horrors of the first Revolution had still a deterrent effect. It was felt, no doubt instinctively, that to renew the former proposals for equalising all mankind, according to the societary principles of 1789, would be distasteful to the masses and arouse the suspicions of authority. A cautious middle course was therefore suggested, so as to remove social abuses without upsetting entirely the arrangements

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or endangering the safety of existing society. The state was to regulate, according to St. Simon, the industrial processes so as to prevent the evils of free competition. The king himself was to head the new association of industry. In this way, it was hoped, the independence of the working-classes in their relations with their employers would be secured, together with a proper share in the produce of their own labour.

The later developments of St. Simonism, and the scheme proposed by Fourier, went far beyond this, as we shall see presently.

We must now give a brief account of the development of these societary schemes, which, after having gained a European notoriety during the first half of the present century, still exercise a powerfully fascinating influence even on the practical mind of social politicians and economists of a later date.

The Count of St. Simon, the progenitor of modern Socialists, was born in 1760 and died in 1825. He was a distinguished scion of the Aristocracy by birth, a child of the Democracy by sympathy, and a member of the Plutocracy practically, though only for a short time, and to his own loss, when endeavouring to retrieve a fortune ruined by the Revolution in financial speculations of a hazardous character. His life was one of strange vicissitudes. As a youth, he served under

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Washington, like many French nobles of his day, in the War of American Independence. "But," he says, "my vocation was not to be a soldier; I was forced into a different kind of activity altogether. To study the march of the human mind, to perform my part in the progress of civilisation, that was the work I set myself to do." On his return he travelled in various countries of Europe, and endeavoured to gather further experiences in the great world of Paris, with a view to study human character as a preparation for remodelling society. Such was his strong belief in his mission of social reform, that he ordered his servant to call him every morning with the words, "Rise, M. le Comte, you have an important work to accomplish."

Like Bacon, he was a strong believer in the progress of humanity with the advancement of science. Like Campanella, he was at first inclined to put mankind under the government of an "intellectual magistracy," a "hierarchy of capacities,"* although later he seems to have preferred the election of the "chiefs of humanity" from the people and by the people. Like Morelly, he expected a regeneration of

* With a view to this he suggests that a subscription be opened at the tomb of Sir I. Newton, and that the subscribers be allowed to nominate the most eminent men of science, to be supported with the honour due to their dignity, by this voluntary endowment of research.

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society from the moral improvement of the race, although, unlike Morelly, he attaches much importance to the influence of rational religion.

By far the most valuable contribution to socialistic literature is his historical criticism of social systems, past and present, resulting in the conviction that the history of man has been mainly the history of a series of conflicts between the workers of society and those who deprive them of the fruits of their labour —the privileged classes in olden times and the capitalists of a later period. He then proceeds to show how a due share in the enjoyment of political power and material prosperity must be restored to the industrial classes. He points out that in order to do this it is not enough to abolish the military and feudal ascendancy, but also the newly-acquired power of the moneyed *bourgeoisie** over the people. He was prosecuted for the publication of a pamphlet under the title "Parabole," in which he endeavours to show how France, by the death of three hundred of her leading artists and scholars, would suffer for a whole generation; whereas, by the loss of her upper ten thousand, including persons of the highest rank in Church and State, as also some of the most wealthy

* This term is applied for the first time to the middle classes by St. Simon, and since then it is used as a term to express the contempt for this section of society by socialistic authors generally.

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members of the *bourgeoisie*, the heart of France, but not her general interests, would suffer. Hence he recognises only three classes in society—viz. (1) artists and scholars; (2) proprietors; (3) non-proprietors. The spiritual power he claimed for the *savants*, the temporal power for the proprietors, and the electoral power for appointing the chiefs of humanity he relegated to universal suffrage.

Though previously inclined to leave the chief power in the hands of the learned, he seemed more inclined, after mature deliberation, to place it into the hands of the industrial classes. The early dream of his life had been that industry and science should rule the world in the future in the same manner as in former times the spiritual and temporal power were wielded by the priests and nobles. But towards the close of his life he said that artists, sages, and the leaders of industry, having the same interests as the people, and belonging to the class of labourers, would naturally gain the predominance. All that was wanted, therefore, was the application of the principle—Everything for the people and by the people.

In the several reforms he proposed in three successive works ("L'Industrie," "L'Organisateur," and "Le Système Industriel," which appeared in 1818, 1819, 1820 respectively) he recommends, with more

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or less distinctness, the general principle of a new organisation of labour by means of a "Centralised Industrialism" to escape those dangers which bring about social convulsions. In one of these works he really demands no more than what, in modern phraseology, might be termed comprehensively co-partnership of the occupiers and owners of the soil, an extension of the county franchise, and greater facilities for the transfer of land, together with the establishment of public credit banks to aid struggling agriculturists in their endeavours to acquire a competency and independence. All these are moderate suggestions for legislative changes in favour of the cultivators of the soil. They have been recommended with all the force of calm reasoning by economists and moderate politicians in our own day.

In another he addresses himself to the condition of the classes engaged in manufacture, and here his proposals are of a more chimerical character. The Utopian constitution he proposes requires a parliament consisting of three chambers. The first of these, the Chamber of Invention, exists for the purpose of discovering new means for enriching and new modes of amusing mankind. It has to watch over the interests of humanity, to provide the necessaries of life for all by means of public works on a large scale, and

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to introduce public festivities for heightening the charm of life.

The second chamber, from the part of its duty consisting in criticising the projects of the first, is called the Chamber of Examination.

The ratification of the measures passed in both rests with the third chamber, which is the General Executive. It consists of the wealthiest members of the community, and is placed under royal patronage. For the main duty of government, St. Simon maintains, is by means of public works and popular education, "to bring about an amelioration in the well-being, physical and moral, of the working classes."

In later publications ("The New Christianity" and "The Catechism of Working-men") he calls in religious enthusiasm to bring about these social changes. He wants Christianity, pure and primitive, without later accretions, in conjunction with science, to renovate society, mentally and morally. Without these he thinks social progress is impossible.

"Sire," he wrote to the king, "the fundamental principles of Christianity require men to regard each other as brothers, and to work together as best they can for their common welfare." "Religion," he remarks again, "ought to direct society towards the great end of ameliorating, as rapidly as possible, the

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condition of the most numerous and least wealthy class" in the community, *i.e.* the working people.

The apostle of this new Christianity, the celebrated founder of modern Socialism, whose brilliant ideas enthralled some of the most cultivated men of the world in his own day, lived in the most abject condition of poverty whilst thus endeavouring to conduct humanity into new paths of social contentment. The descendant of Charlemagne, who had begun life with a yearly income of five hundred thousand francs, was compelled for a time to take a clerk's place with a salary of one thousand francs per annum, then to live in dependence on the bounty of an attached old servant, and when this trusted friend died, to depend for the rest of his life on a small pension paid him by his own family, to whom he had become reconciled at last. But, in the face of all these difficulties and vicissitudes, his belief in the higher destiny of humanity remained almost unshaken. Even in the midst of acute sufferings, bodily and mental, his trust in the final triumph of his principles was as firm as ever.

On his death-bed, surrounded by a small band of followers, he said to one of them: "You have arrived at an epoch when combined efforts will lead to a prodigious result. . . . . The fruit is ripe; you have only to pluck it. . . . . The latter part

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of my work, 'The New Christianity,' will not be understood at once. People have thought that every religious system must disappear because they have succeeded in proving Catholicism to be in a state of decay. This is a mistake. Religion cannot disappear from the world; it can only be transformed. . . . . Roderigues, do not forget this! Remember that to do grand things we must have enthusiasm. . . . . All my life resolves itself into one great thought—to secure for all mankind the most unfettered development of their faculties." After a few moments of silence, breathing his last, he added: "Forty-eight hours after our second publication" (*i.e.* of the newspaper published to promulgate his theory), "the union of working-men will have been formed, *the future is ours!*"*

The work he left incomplete was readily taken up by his disciples. His earnest enthusiasm had roused the socialistic spirit of his followers. It remained for them to gather the scattered thoughts of the master, and to arrange them into systematic order. There were but a few positive directions to be found in the voluminous writings of St. Simon. His manner of teaching had been to throw out hints, and to give

* That this sentiment still prevails among modern socialists may be deduced from the fact that the newest and most scientific socialistic periodical in Germany calls itself *The Future* (*Die Zuknuft*).

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vent to forcible aphorisms in the manner of a grand seigneur as he was. He left the task to meaner minds of collecting his ideas and amplifying his statements, so as to elaborate them into a religious formula and a social code. His negative criticism had been complete, his positive proposals were left in an uncertain speculative haze, to be elucidated and transformed into a complete theory for the guidance of the St. Simonian theocracy. The men were found for the task. Bazard became the head, and Enfantin the heart of the movement, and these "joint pontiffs" of the St. Simonian "Church," of which St. Simon was regarded as the head, endeavoured to reproduce the written and oral teachings of the founder, the former theoretically, the latter practically, and so laid the foundation of their associative constitution.

Then was formed the "grand college," or school of St. Simon, with its affiliated branches. Henceforth universal association of labour was to take the place of the competitive struggle of isolated individuals which had been ruinous in its results. All were to join in united efforts to improve the condition of our common humanity, and thus the antagonistic workings of selfish interest would disappear. Inequality, they acknowledged, must be the basis of any human association, being an "indispensable condition of social order." Their programme, appearing on the first page

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of the *Globe*, their organ, on the 18th January, 1831, was as follows:

"RELIGION.

"SCIENCE. INDUSTRY.

"UNIVERSAL ASSOCIATION.

"All social institutions must have for their end the moral, intellectual, and physical improvement of the largest and poorest class.

"All privileges of birth without exception are abolished.

"To everyone according to his capacity, to every capacity according to work done."

Henceforth the labourers were no longer to be degraded by poverty and misery, but to be elevated by the ennobling effects of sanctified labour and hallowed pleasure. Humanity has passed successively from cannibalism to slavery, from that to serfdom, from that to wages-labour. To complete the progress of the race, wages-labour must disappear, and the universal association of all, as labourers for society, must take its place under the guidance of the high-priests of humanity.

Speeches were delivered, newspapers and pamphlets were printed, in the metropolis as well as in the provinces, societies were formed to carry out the St. Simonian theories, and the number of followers grew rapidly and disseminated their social ideas far

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and wide. Scholars, business men of undoubted capacity, lent their names or sacrificed their substance to the cause. The established St. Simonian houses were thriving for a time. But presently the popular ardour cooled down. Internal dissensions and financial difficulties jeopardised the undertaking. The impractical nature of the societary scheme became apparent as soon as it was subjected to the test of actual experience. To complete the failure, a rupture took place between the leaders. Enfantin, on the retirement of Bazard, indulged in lawless extravagances, which soon brought St. Simonism into discredit.

"With Enfantin," says M. Paul Janet, in a valuable contribution on this subject recently published, "commences *the crusade of Socialism against Capital.*" The originally moderate proposals of the master had to give way to theories more tending towards Communism. Perhaps irritation, consequent upon failure, gave rise to the expression of more extreme opinions and the adoption of extreme measures. At all events, at this time the revolution contemplated by the St. Simonians as affecting property and the family assumes a more sweeping character.

Although, unlike some modern socialists, they do not decree the abolition of property, they attack the right of inheritance. The state is to be a sort of

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general legatee. "All instruments of labour" (including capital, etc., property, in case of the owner's demise) "are to be formed into a social fund to be utilised by the association" (*i.e.* the community) "as directed by hierarchical appointment."

As to the family, man is to be regarded as a "social (unit or) individual"—*i.e.* only in his capacity as a member in the common brotherhood of which Enfantin is the father. The "emancipation of women," as understood by Enfantin, and the marriage bond, as interpreted by him in terms of sensuous mysticism, if not voluptuous indecency, strike at the root of a pure family life and destroy the sacredness of family relations.

These aberrations from the original path chalked out by St. Simon broke Bazard's heart, who died soon, and was buried by the side of his master. They also brought about the speedy dissolution of the St. Simonian Society. The theories of St. Simon and his school are nearly forgotten now, but their effects have survived, and some of them have proved beneficial indirectly. The organisation of public works under the second Empire, and the idea of popular loans, are to be credited to the influence of St. Simon and his followers. It was owing to St. Simon's scathing criticism that many social abuses have disappeared, and, on the other hand, many and fruitful

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ideas affecting social reforms owe their popularity to his genius and enthusiasm.

It is well known that Napoleon III. was much interested in the teachings of St. Simon, and that he endeavoured to carry out some of his schemes of raising the condition of the working-classes, having granted an interview for that purpose to the aged Enfantin. The material improvement of the lower sections in French society during the second Empire may perhaps be attributed to the same cause.

But the influence of St. Simonism extends far beyond the country of its birth; for all the more recent schemes for social improvement, especially as regards the organisation of labour, are influenced, in one form or another, by St. Simonism. Moreover, its immoderate demands for social reconstruction have paved the way for moderate reforms.

The culminating result to be expected from the triumphs of his own system was characterised by St. Simon as the substitution of work, by means of *co-operation* among the labourers, in place of wages-labour. Now this, too, is the prospect held out by calm economists like Mill, Cairnes, Fawcett, and others in this country,* whilst German economists

* See an article by the enthusiastic apostle of co-operation, Dr. Jacob Holyoake, in "The Nineteenth Century," Sept. 1878, on this new principle in modern industry.

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go so far as to declare that we are living in a transitional period, during which wages-labour is being displaced by co-operation, and that this process of transformation is gradually, though almost imperceptibly, being accomplished. In this fact they hail the promise of settling peaceably the threatening conflict between capital and labour. The fact that he indulged in many chimerical fancies, which for a time led some of his followers astray from the straight path of human progress into by-paths of questionable and futile socialistic experiments, provokes pity rather than contempt.

It is the fashion with some opponents of socialism to confound the followers of St. Simon with the atheistical socialistic agitators of a later period. Sometimes intentionally, at other times unwittingly, they represent them as a set of godless and immoral libertines. Whatever may be our sympathies or antipathies as to their opinions, it is but just to judge their belief and moral convictions by their own confession. Their religious creed is: "God is one, God is all that He is, everything is in Him, everything is by Him, everything is Himself." This may be pantheism, but it is not atheism. Their ethical code of social duty is contained in a few words forgotten at times by some of their critics: "*Love one another.*"

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CHAPTER V.

FOURIER AND THE PHALANSTÈRE.

AMONG the curiosities in the history of Utopias the fact may be mentioned that the three founders of modern socialism—Babeuf, St. Simon, and Fourier—were imprisoned almost at the same time by the revolutionary tribunals during the Reign of Terror. Two of these have been noticed already; the third will form the subject of the present chapter.

Fourier, whose societary theories have exercised a powerful influence on the social reforms and socialistic tendencies of our own days, was born at Besançon, in 1772, and, being the son of a woollen-draper, was destined in early life to follow his father's calling. When deprived of a not inconsiderable fortune during the Revolution, he became an assistant in a house of business. This position he occupied during the greater part of his life, and in it he found time and leisure for scientific and literary studies and the gradual development of his social schemes.

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Thus, whilst the Count of St. Simon, poor and neglected, was brooding over his theory of social regeneration in a corner of Paris, a shopkeeper's assistant in the south of France was pondering over like social problems under similar conditions of obscure indigence. And thus it happened that when St. Simonism collapsed, after dazzling the world like a splendid meteor for two short years, Fourierism took its place, and preserved the continuity of the social movement.

The only indication of talent and future fame we have in the record of Fourier's boyhood are the composition of a poem on the death of a pastrycook, and the acquisition of some prizes in school, which attracted the attention of the authorities at the time.

Two incidents are mentioned among the anecdotes of his early life which seem to have produced the bent of character and tendency of mind which influenced all his later productions—namely, an utter contempt for the mean expediencies of the *bourgeoisie*, to which he belonged, and the unqualified dislike of the principles of mercantile morality prevalent in his day. At the age of five he is said to have received a severe castigation from his father for giving expression to some honest, though unbusiness-like, remark before a customer in the parental warehouse, which sadly interfered with the completion of a

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profitable bargain. Again, when he was nineteen years old, he was present, some say compelled to assist, at the throwing of a large quantity of rice into the river, a practice indulged in by some of the tradesmen of that day with a view to raise factitiously the price of provisions.

The selfish duplicity displayed in these transactions opened his eyes to the unsatisfactory state of things in the commercial world, and made him vow to become the implacable opponent of a system so inconsistent with the principles of truth and goodness, and in its self-destructive egotism so much at variance with the true interests of society.

However, it was not until nearly reaching middle age that he startled the world with his first great work, "The Theory of the Four Movements," published in 1807. In it "his object was to display the identity of the laws that govern the four great departments—society, animal life, organic life, and the material universe." This book was followed up by a "Treatise on Association, Agricultural and Domestic," and other works of more or less importance, containing his schemes of social improvement.

In them, as in similar works of other social reformers, we have reason to admire rather the pungency of negative criticism on existing social abuses than the constructive power in framing a rational and

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feasible scheme of social reorganisation. Fourier's sketches of social ideals have undoubtedly suggested numerous moderate reforms, and have given rise to "social aims" of a high order, and so have assisted in bringing about an amelioration in the labourer's condition. But, on the other hand, his strange proposals and fantastic speculations, expressed in language sometimes objectionable, often obscure, and always peculiar, have given a powerful handle to the opponents of social reform to expose his whole system to ridicule and contempt, an opportunity of which they have availed themselves very freely. "The dross and not the gold has been discovered by the critics, and posterity alone," says Marlo, "will appoint him the high rank he deserves as an economist."

To judge of his system we must note the manner in which he regarded man and the universe. Happiness, he maintains, is "our being's end and aim," and in order to its attainment a new social science is indispensable. As Newton's discoveries served in explaining the laws that regulate the movements in the material universe, so the laws prevailing in the social world must be ascertained before we attempt to render mankind happy. To become such a social Newton was Fourier's ambition.

Like Morelly, he accuses mental and moral philosophers of having systematically neglected the laws.

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of nature, and, like him, he seeks to bring back mankind to a true recognition of these laws with a view to render them happy. The general drift of Fourier's code of nature may be expressed thus:

Follow your inclinations unreservedly, and you will be sure to fulfil your mission in life. Your natural instincts will *attract* you towards those callings for which you are *destined*, and your feelings will guide you in the pursuit of those objects which are most desirable in your particular case. Variety of dispositions will thus call forth variety of pursuits, and the general effect will be harmonious action and complete satisfaction throughout the universe.

Why should we suppress our natural inclinations? This only produces pain, and must therefore be wrong. On the other hand, what produces pleasure and satisfaction must be right. As there is a pre-established harmony in all things, we only mar the plan of nature and spoil our own happiness in repressing our natural instincts, which are all good, being divinely ordained.

Let men, then, form themselves into small groups, according to natural predilections, to follow similar pursuits. It will soon be found that, instead of the prevailing repugnance to labour, work will be done, not only cheerfully, but with enthusiasm. Let several of these groups again be united into series of

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workers, engaged in different pursuits suitable to their respective inclinations, then labour once repulsive will be engaged in with ardour so as to render it necessary to enjoin rest rather than to make work compulsory.

To avoid the dull monotony of sameness in occupation, let there be frequent change, "periodic varieties, contrasted situations, change of scene, interesting incidents, enticing novelties," to stimulate body and mind at the same time, and presently all will be vying with each other in skill and zeal, trying to do their best in friendly rivalry.

All existing disharmonies in society owe their origin to our misdirected efforts, by means of our "artificial restraint," to suppress natural instincts. Therefore, if once these good instincts be allowed to have free course, labour will become not only a delight, but even a passion, and from thence will follow prosperity and general well-being.

This coming era of human happiness Fourier calls "the bursting of harmony out of chaos;" and the "pivot of social mechanism" on which the whole system is to turn is the principle of mutual attraction, as potent in its energy to unite men on earth as in assigning their various spheres to the constellations in the heavens.

Now this principle is felt, though in a faulty

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manner, even in existing society. Association in the family and in business relations exists already, but an extension of the principle is necessary, and with it important reforms in the family life and in the organisation of labour. Fourier dwells with bitterness, after the manner of J. S. Mill, on the subjection of women, and shows how the gradual improvement in the position of women is the determining cause of each upward movement in the social progress. But we cannot here enter upon this question. It will be more to our purpose to follow Fourier in his examination of social institutions generally, and his original ideas in trying to improve them.

He is keen in his strictures on the imperfect condition of agricultural and domestic economy in the absence of co-operative action. He describes the pitiable condition of agricultural implements and buildings, the fearful waste and dissipation of labour force, all arising from the isolated position of the small farmers, each having his own separate establishment. A similar indictment is pronounced against domestic economy. Here the preparation of food, the use of fuel and household utensils, cleaning, the rearing up of children, &c., all taking place in separate households, occasion much pecuniary waste and personal discomfort. Moreover, he shows the evil consequences of work being carried on in small

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and dreary workshops, in solitude and monotony, and the distaste for work produced by inadequate reward, and the appalling prevalence of wretched poverty following in the wake of our modern civilisation. He speaks of commerce as the "curse of civilisation," and of merchants as "a swarm of vultures." In answer to those who boast of the liberal institutions of our age, he grimly asks: "What is the good of liberty to a man well-nigh famishing because of the insufficient remuneration of his labour?" People talk of the "bliss of living under a free constitution," as if it was any comfort to a poor man to read "Magna Charta" to pacify his appetite when hungry. The savage enjoys the natural right of the meadow, the river, the forest to chase in and collect wild fruits, which grow in profusion. Civilisation has robbed him of these, and only left him a "minimum" of daily support instead. The condition of society in his day he shortly and not altogether incorrectly describes as "a social contract founded on hunger and bayonets."

And what are Fourier's proposals to bring about a more "harmonious organisation of industry," and a more satisfactory condition of mutual social relations?

Starting, as we have seen, from the principle that "scarcely any labour, however severe, undergone by human beings for the sake of subsistence, exceeds

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that which other human beings, whose subsistence is already provided for, are found ready and even eager to undergo for pleasure," as in the case of hunting, fishing, and sports generally, or, as in the case of kings like Louis XIV. becoming an amateur apothecary, and Louis XVIII. acting as cook, he would assign work to all, according to their special aptitudes and personal predilections. He looks for efficiency of work in the co-operative association of the workers, united with each other according to similarity of tastes and mutual sympathy. Such a system of voluntary co-operation would have all the advantages of wholesale trade without any of its drawbacks. The whole of society would be divided into three classes—capitalists, labourers, and men of talent, each receiving a fixed proportion of the proceeds of their common labour. They form, as it were, among themselves so many joint-stock companies, in which all are active members, and where the governors or directors are the people's choice. All share in labour and profit, according to their capacity, and contribute, in capital or labour, to the common fund, whilst the produce of their united efforts is stored up in public magazines, to be distributed by officers appointed for that purpose. Superior food is provided in common kitchens; all trades are carried on in factory style on a large scale; service in

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the field is performed by means of co-operative agriculture; and much waste of labour and money is avoided by all dwelling under the same roof of the Phalanstère. Here all the necessaries, and not a few of the luxuries of life, are provided for the inmates by the common council or standing committee acting for the community. A few communal agents do the work of the present herds of useless tradesmen, and the society is all the better and the richer for this change.

To carry out this scheme in detail, Fourier requires that about 1,800 persons, or 400 families (subdivided into 60-80 series, and these again into 24-32 groups each), should form themselves into one commune. "Every kind of industry gives rise to as many groups as there are varieties of employment, and every group may be divided again into as many sections as may be needed in the performance of the several industrial functions."

A square league of land is assigned to every phalange* of this sect for agricultural purposes. The land is worked in common after the manner of ancient village communities, the proprietors of land,

* *Phalange* and *Phalanstère*, the one being the name for the aggregate of human beings in the commune, and the other that of their abode, are words derived from the Macedonian phalanx, in allusion to their working together, like a phalanx of Macedonian soldiers, in subduing natural obstacles.

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stock, and implements receiving compensation for the proprietary rights, private property being duly respected.

The Phalanstère is the centre and rallying-point of the community. There reside its members of every grade, from the highest to the lowest, in comparative independence of each other's society, and yet within easy reach of friendly intercourse. The Phalanstère is a noble pile of buildings, in construction both elegant and commodious, resembling a vast palace in the grandeur of its architectural style, and possessing, at the same time, all the comforts of a home in its internal arrangements. Wings are attached at both ends, where, at some distance from the centre of family life, and without disturbing its even flow, the manufacturing process is carried on. Extensive corridors and covered walks serve as promenades for the aged and infirm. Galleries and verandahs run round the whole building, airy in summer, heated in winter, to keep up an easy communication with all the workshops. They also serve the purpose of exposing art objects and exhibiting the results of industrial progress. In the midst of this block of buildings rises the tower whence issue the commands of the central authority, and which also serves as a clock tower, telegraph station, and astronomical observatory. A theatre

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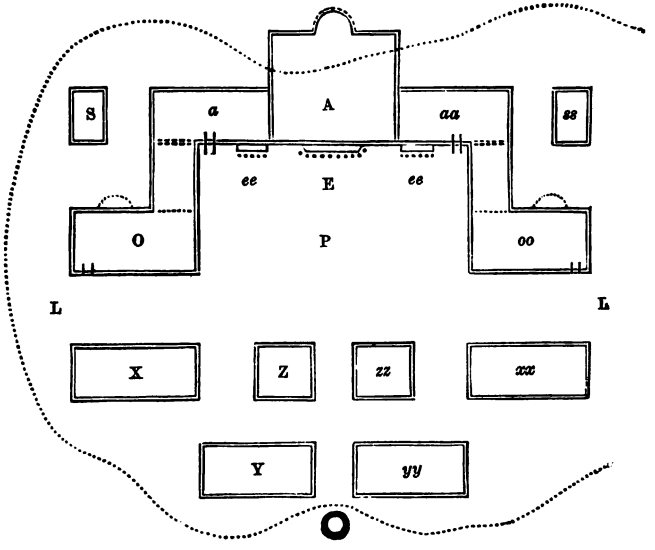
and exchange find a place also within the same circuit.

PLAN OF A PHALANSTÈRE, ACCORDING TO FOURIER.



The double lines represent the different buildings composing the Phalanstère. The tracings of a broken line outside represent the course of a river; the open space between L and L is a broad street between the Phalanstère and the stables; P, in the middle, is the grand square of the place; A, the grand court, which forms a promenade in winter, planted with resinous vegetation and evergreens.

a, *aa*, *o*, *oo* = courtyards connecting the different lodgings of the inmates.

x, *y*, *z*, *xx*, *yy*, *zz*, are a series of offices and outhouses and farm buildings.

E, *ee*, were three portals opening into the forecourts leading to various business localities.

The buildings adjacent to A may comprise the church, exchange, town hall, opera house, the central tower, the telegraph and post-

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offices, &c. That portion of A bulging out from the square is intended for the rich class, as far away as possible from the noise.

The two courts *a*, *aa*, near the wings of the building, are set apart, one for the general kitchen, the other for stabling and equipages.

The two buildings *s*, *ss* may be turned into public buildings, sacred or secular, if isolation should be found desirable. They are connected with the Phalanstère by subterranean walks.

O, *oo*, in the centre of each wing, serve for the carrying on of all the noisy occupations and similar purposes.

In fact, everything is done in the Phalanstère to render life free and attractive, and to remove the unpleasant distinctions of class by encouraging all the members of the Phalanstère to regard each other, notwithstanding differences of fortune and capacity, as members of one family. Where "universal education has caused universal good manners, and all classes mix with one another with ease and cordiality," as in the Phalanstère, class-antagonism is excluded.

Lodgings, common rooms, refectories, workshops, kitchens, cellars, granaries, offices, are all situated in a manner so as to secure free and easy access, as well as economical and intelligent serviceableness. The workshops are lofty and airy, so constructed as to surround labour with "artificial charms," and there are none of the depressing influences of the atmosphere and surroundings as in our factories and workshops.

"About half-way between the Phalanstère and the boundaries of the property, four *châteaux* are erected in different directions

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for the accommodation of the members engaged in agriculture. Here breakfast and other refreshments may be had." To render field-labour attractive, "different kinds of culture are to be found side by side—flowers and fruits interspersed amidst corn and pasture or forest—their position determined with a view to artistic effect quite as much as to profit. The labour is itself of the nature of a *fête*; brightly-coloured tents afford shelter from the rays of the sun or from rain; flags and banners, ornamented with the devices of the series, representing their triumphs in industry, indicate the parties at work. Tasteful kiosks are erected at convenient distances, and are supplied with exquisite pastry and sparkling wine. The labourers go to the field and return again accompanied by the strains of music and the sweet singing of the youthful choirs."

Sanitary precautions are taken throughout the settlements, and every branch of work is rendered attractive so as to arouse the enthusiasm of all for voluntary labour. A solidarity of interests incites all to work most effectively, whereby the prosperity of the whole is ensured. Envy and dissatisfaction are unknown where there is a fair distribution of reward for labour rendered, and compulsory labour is unnecessary where excessive hardships have been removed by superior organisation. If there is any rivalry it is the emulation of groups to outdo each other in diligence and skill, as different regiments of soldiers seek to outshine each other in valour and discipline. No individual heartburnings are felt, because there are no personal defeats where all alike share in the results of conquest.

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Intrigues and favouritism on the part of the officials are avoided by leaving their selection mainly to universal suffrage, and by the fact that all members are jealously watching over the common interests.

Intemperance in such a society is a thing unthought of, as with a constant flow of general prosperity and in the absence of occasional destitution the temptations for temporary gross enjoyment are removed.

Thus every precaution is taken to prevent the harmonious well-being of the society from being disturbed by any of those causes which from time to time distract our less perfect societies.

Fourier is not only satisfied with remodelling French society in this manner, he looks forward to a time when his system will have spread all over the habitable globe. As the phalanx of the Macedonian host, well-equipped and full of ardour, subdued nation after nation, and thus extended the empire of Alexander, so these phalanxes of industrial warriors rigorously and zealously proceed in the march of social conquest. They remove all natural obstacles and subdue all opposing forces under the dominion of man. They plant forests in the mountains and render deserts fruitful; they reclaim morasses and erect bridges; they regulate river-basins and dig canals; they spread networks of rail over the habitable globe and cut through the isthmuses of Suez and

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Panama, to link together more closely all the families of the earth.

To make himself truly lord of the creation, man, aided by science, succeeds even in removing the disastrous effects of natural causes which stand in the way of human progress. "The icy atmosphere of the poles and the burning simooms of the equator" are attempered in this manner; "the snow-covered steppes of Siberia and the arid deserts of Africa" are thus brought under tillage. Magnificent palaces rise in once desolate places, and lovely tracks, never trod by human feet before, become highways for the "confederation of phalanxes," spreading their ramifications all over the world.

When Considérant, the follower of Fourier, gave expression to such and similar sanguine hopes as to the future prospects of Fourierism in a course of lectures delivered at Dijon in 1841, there was loud and prolonged applause among an enthusiastic audience. This was just four years after his master had died, unappreciated and scarcely regretted by the majority of his countrymen. The great socialist, whom his disciples call the Christopher Columbus of the social world, the architect of man's happiness here below, after living a simple, modest, and laborious life, died unknown and almost unlamented by the world at large.

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All he had demanded was a thirty years' trial of his system; but few, very few, could be found to carry his scheme into practice. One or two feeble attempts were made, but ended in ignominious failure. He bore his fate with fortitude; he saw a school rising to disseminate his doctrines, and in his old age he received many tokens of regard from devoted pupils. A stone placed on his modest tomb bears the inscription containing in few words the fundamentals of his social creed:

"*Instincts correspond to the destiny, from the series springs harmony.*"

Now, what is the general impression left on our minds by a perusal of Fourier's social projects? What has been the effect of his teaching on the theory and practice of social life?

There is much that strikes us as visionary and impractical in these astounding proposals for remodelling society on the basis of the attraction theory and by means of a "serial mechanism." That the harmonious well-being of a world could be secured by permitting all mankind to follow their natural propensities; that the government of the whole human family could be carried on by authorities whose tenure of office depends on the people's will, without serious disturbances periodically throughout the social organism, is scarcely imaginable.

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Among human beings, as we find them, even the highest regard for the common welfare will not prevent the forces of self-regarding tendencies clashing with the dictates of social duty, and so injuriously interfering with the solidarity of interests in the community. Personal jealousies and individual passions would sooner or later disturb the social harmony in the best regulated Phalanstère.

In Fourier's plausible promises of unbroken harmony in the society that is to be, we see only the counterpart of an erroneous exposition of the supposed harmonious working of society as it is, indulged in by some apologists of our present economic system. Social disharmonies are not likely to right themselves either by the free play of selfish passions in the present competition struggle, as some suppose, or by leaving man to follow his natural instincts only, as Fourier taught. They must be sought in the further development of the non-self-regarding motives and the growth of Christian self-denial among mankind.

Wanting as Fourier's scheme is in philosophical solidity and abounding as it does with chimerical theorising, his writings contain many practical suggestions which have been utilised, in part at least, already. To these we desire, in conclusion, to call the reader's attention, as our object is not to subject these social schemes here to detailed refutation, but

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rather to point out the good they contain, and to what extent they have resulted in promoting directly and indirectly the improvement of the human race.*

Apart from the beneficial influences of Fourier's criticism on existing social evils and wrongs which arise from ignoring the special needs of the labouring classes and their claim to a fuller share in the enjoyments of life, Fourier deserves also our attention on account of some of his positive proposals.

The various attempts which have been made in co-operative agriculture, including "the little Utopia," as *The Times* called it, acquired not long ago by the National Agricultural Labourers' Union in Lincolnshire, for this purpose, may owe, in a measure, their origin to Fourier's advocacy of association in field labour. So, again, Mr. Fisher's recommendation of co-operative housekeeping, in an article of "The Nineteenth Century" for September, 1877, to avoid the enormous waste in separate establishments, reminds us of similar suggestions of Fourier. The passing through Parliament of the Amalgamated Factories Act, the erection of a superior block of labourers' homesteads by Lady Coutts in the east of London, M. Godin's† social palace at Guise, called

* For a fuller criticism of Fourier's economic theories, see the author's work on Socialism, p. 123, *et seq.*

† See Thomas Brassey's Lectures on the Labour Question, p. 163, *et seq.*

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the "Familistère," and avowedly built on the plan of Fourier's Phalanstère; even Dr. Richardson's* plan for common workshops, having for their object the health and comfort of the labourer in the workshop and the home, bear traces of the influence of Fourier's ideas. These piecemeal adaptations of Fourierism may appear very insignificant to thoroughgoing reformers, but it has to be remembered that all social reforms are necessarily of slow growth. Social revolutions such as Fourier dreamed of are practically impossible, but the adoption of social reforms in detail becomes often desirable; and in order to do this there must be a primary impulse and direction given from some quarter. This impulsive force comes from social idealists like Fourier, who are undaunted by the indifference of the incredulous world, and not unfrequently even impervious to the logic of plain facts and deaf to the voice of common sense. They err in expecting immediate effects and total changes where remote effects and partial changes are only to be hoped for; but they are right in rising superior to the men of their own generation in descrying realisable ideals capable of future fulfilment. The social prophet of the future may see all his plans shattered in his life-

* See Dr. Richardson's Hygeia, a City of Health, p. 19, *et seq.*

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time. But what is true in his teaching will surely survive after a season of depreciation and neglect, and bear fruit in the well-being of coming generations.

The cause of this—the general failure of Utopian systems, as a whole, and the partial acceptation of some truths they contain—is to be found in that wholesome tendency of average men to be guided by practical rather than ideal considerations, to prefer tentative measures to thoroughgoing schemes of social improvement. "The speculative mind is easily transported into ideal spheres, but people do not always follow," says M. Reybaud, a contemporary and critic of Fourier. "Human beings, like patients, would rather endure well-known pains, with which they have become familiar, than take the chance of a first-rate operation. They prefer a few timid efforts —and those at long intervals, slowly attempted, and deliberately carried out—to secure their recovery. This instinct of society, with all its drawbacks, has many advantages; it may retard the progressive development of the race, but it at the same time places an impassable barrier against reckless innovation."

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CHAPTER VI.

ROBERT OWEN AND ENGLISH SOCIALISM.

THE assertion is made not unfrequently, even by those who are well instructed, that the strong common sense of the English workman, and the conservative instincts of the English people generally, are unassailable safeguards against the spread of socialistic tendencies in this country. This assertion will prove to be true only within certain limits if brought to the test of past experience.* For the avidity with which Robert Owen's schemes of socialistic co-operation were received by high and low, less than half a century ago, and the extravagant expectations entertained by all classes of society as to the results of the first Reform Bill in ameliorating the social condition of the people, are a proof of the liability even of Englishmen, under given conditions, to indulge in Utopian aspirations, as well as their

* See, however, an able article on the growth of English Socialism, by Mr. Cunningham, in "The Contemporary Review," Jan. 1879.

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readiness to accept schemes of social improvement when put forward by enthusiastic advocates.

The humours of the peccant social world

are not confined to any country in particular.* Wherever we find social disharmonies, there, too, we may look for social dreamers, and people who believe in their dreams and the interpretation thereof. Such disharmonies existed in this country when Owen appeared on the scene as a social reformer, and hence his temporary success.

We have already alluded to the unfavourable effects of the rising industry of towns and the introduction of machinery on the labouring classes generally in France. These evil effects were aggravated in this country by a vast immigration of Irish labourers, by a fall of prices for manufactured goods, owing to severe competition with foreign produce, by political events and financial legislation seriously imperilling the prosperity of English commerce, and producing a depressing influence on the rate of wages. Universal distress in town and country was the con-

* In a recent number of the "Gegenwart," the Chartist movement in this country has been compared with the social democracy of Germany, and the writer of the article shows by a number of instances the striking analogy between the two movements and the measures adopted by Government for their suppression.—*See* "*Gegenwart,*" *Sept.* 14, 1878.

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sequence. Employers took advantage of this opportunity for extracting cheap labour from people on the verge of starvation, and so provoked that bitter class-hatred which still prevails, in a modified form, to the present day.

The "tyranny of capital," and the severity of the competition struggle, were felt most acutely. "Industry was querulous," and "a general despondency seized upon the rural classes." Secret societies organised riots, revolutionary placards appeared on the walls of London, mass meetings were held demanding "radical reform," and committees were appointed by the House of Commons, which, "after a long and anxious inquiry, had not been able to discover any means calculated immediately to relieve the present distress."

It was during this season of social disorganisation that Robert Owen, who had been a young man at the commencement of the new era of commerce, and had accumulated a fortune in the cotton trade, fully aware of the shadowy sides of this new system of industry, endeavoured to come to the rescue of the working-classes by means of private philanthropy.

A contemporary of Fourier, and in many respects resembling him in character and aims, he endeavoured by similar though not identical means to become the saviour of society. Owen was, like

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Fourier, the son of a tradesman, but more successful in raising himself by dint of industry and commercial genius to a high position in the mercantile world, and so acquired a fortune which enabled him to make social experiments at his own expense. Fourier, absorbed in scientific theorising, had failed in producing any marked and immediate effect in his surroundings. Owen, less theoretical, but more practical, by force of acquired business habits, and with true British pertinacity, obtained a comparatively speedy success. Fourier was a political philosopher, brilliant and imaginative, but wanting in utilitarian tact. Owen, on the other hand, was possessed of a disciplined energy and strong common sense, which preserved him, during the earlier period of his career at least, from the extreme vagaries of enthusiastic ideology. Fourier's plan of an ideal association was surpassed by Owen's less systematised but more feasible scheme of tentative co-operation; and thus it happened that, whereas Fourier lived and died a writer of books and a thinker of fine thoughts, unappreciated by the world at large, Owen, whom he called, somewhat spitefully, a most audacious sophist, met with encouragement and success among his own countrymen, gained respect and renown in distant lands, sought by the great, consulted by governments, and counting among his

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patrons princes of the blood in England, and more than one crowned head in Europe.

The main cause of this success was Owen's sensible plan of beginning with the practical improvement of the working people under his immediate superintendence as manager, and afterwards as owner of the cotton mills in New Lanark. There, on his first arrival, he saw himself surrounded by squalor and poverty, intemperance and crime, so common among the operatives of that day, and not quite unknown in our own. He determined to change the character of the people, by improving their outward condition and by raising their character with the help of education. He erected healthy dwellings with adjacent gardens, and let them at cost price to the workpeople. He built stores where commodities of good quality might be purchased at wholesale prices, to remove the evils of the truck system. To avoid the enormous waste of separate cooking, he provided a common dining-hall, where wholesome food might be obtained at reasonable prices. Besides this he opened a house for the reception of infants, the first infant-school in Great Britain; he excluded all children under ten from the workshops, and made the physical and moral training of the young his special care. He then adopted measures to put down drunkenness and to encourage the savings of the people by enabling them to lay by

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a small proportion of their earnings at given intervals in profitable investments. To stimulate diligence and fair conduct, tablets, painted in various colours, were suspended in the workshops to indicate the proficiency and moral standing of those employed there. Punishments and fines were strictly excluded, and the hours of labour reduced to ten daily. At one time when trade came to a sudden collapse, and the machinery had to be stopped, and other masters discharged their "hands," Owen, at a cost of £7,000, kept his, though unemployed, all the time. Such efforts of genuine philanthropy, and unprecedented devotion to the cause of humanity could not fail to produce a good effect. The employed became attached to their employers, took a personal interest in the success of the business, laboured ably and conscientiously, and so made the mills of New Lanark a great financial success, thus verifying the remark of the socialist Bellers, who had said two centuries before, that "*it is in the interest* of the rich to take care of the poor." And such was the general appearance of prosperity and sober contentedness in this small colony of labourers, that Mr. Griscom, an American traveller, who visited it in 1819, concludes his report in these words: "There is not, I apprehend, to be found in any part of the world a manufacturing village in which so much order, good government, tranquillity,

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and rational happiness prevail. It affords an eminent and instructive example of the good that may be effected by well-directed efforts to promote the real comfort and, I may add, the morality of the labouring classes."

Thus one of those romantic valleys of the Clyde which have been invested with the charm of poetry by Sir Walter Scott had also been rendered the scene of "an earthly paradise," from a social point of view, by Robert Owen. Kings and emperors came to visit the model settlement, and returned impressed with the conviction that the elevation of the masses depends on the ready earnestness and self-denying sympathy of those who try to improve them.

Owen now began to hope for a further expansion of his benevolent scheme, and proceeded to formulate his social theories in letters, pamphlets, and other publications, which he addressed to European governments abroad, and to ministers and parliaments at home. In order to awaken interest for the cause among the people themselves, itinerary lecturers were traversing the country, holding meetings, and expounding these new social theories of Owen. What these theories were, and what were the means adopted for their realisation, we now proceed to consider.

Observing that man is a creature of circumstances, that to a certain extent he really is what birth, educa-

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tion, early associations, and surrounding conditions make him, Owen sought to shape man's will and character by early education, and to bring out his good qualities by an appeal to his better nature. This was in his estimation the true road to social regeneration. Train up children with a love for virtue, and surround them with conditions favourable to further development, and the future well-being of society will be secured. Faulty education and surroundings unfavourable to early training in goodness and truth have hitherto retarded the progress of the race. Henceforth let governments, responsible for the welfare of mankind, seek to remove wickedness and vice as if they were nauseous diseases, and encourage virtue and godliness by the wisdom of their social policy. The foundations of prosperous virtue and moral happiness are to be found in the wise appreciation of natural laws and their application to the social body by the rulers of mankind.

Before applying the remedies, Government must first become cognisant of the nature and causes of disease in the body-politic. Owen is not slow in exposing these. The increase of pauperism he, like Sismondi, ascribes to the introduction of machinery, and the general distress among the people he attributes, like modern socialists, to the use of money payments as the only means for rewarding labour.

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"Thus," he says, "the working-classes are made the slaves of an artificial system of wages, more cruel in its effects than any slavery ever practised by society, either barbarous or civilised."

To counteract the evils of pauperism, and to preserve the people from the evil results of competition, Owen, in a report presented to the parliamentary committee on the poor laws, suggests that—

Every union or county should provide a farm for the employment of their poor. When circumstances admitted of it, there should be a manufactory in connection with it. In this manner he contended that the poor would support themselves. . . . . Mr. Owen furnished the committee with a drawing of a model establishment such as he contemplated. The land would consist of 1,000 to 1,500 acres, and the buildings afford accommodation for 1,200 people. The most convenient form would be a square, divided into two parallelograms by the erection of public buildings in the centre. Lodging-rooms would occupy three sides of the square; each family would be provided with four rooms, and its numbers would be restricted to four persons. When it consisted of more than two children the others were to be sent to the dormitory, which would occupy the entire of the fourth side of the square. Their parents would be permitted to see them at meals, and "all other proper times." The object of this arrangement would be to form their character from an early age, to withdraw them from evil influences, to train them to good habits. The system adopted at New Lanark might, perhaps, supply the best model.

. . . . The building in the centre of the square would contain a kitchen, mess-room, school-rooms, library, and lecture-hall. The poor would enjoy every advantage that economy could suggest; the same roof would cover many dwellings; the same stove might warm every room; the food would be cooked

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at the same time and on the same fire; the meals would be eaten from the same table, in the society of friends and fellow-workers. Sympathies now restricted to the family would be extended to the community; the union would be still further cemented by an equal participation in the profits, an equal share in the toil; nor need any apprehension exist lest a community of interest should diminish the keenness of industry. A man is not likely to work with less zeal for a society in which he himself has a direct interest than for a master in whose prosperity he has no concern. None will seek a larger share in the profits than another, because the avidity of gain will diminish in proportion to the ease of acquisition. Competition is the cause of many vices; association will be their corrective. That the heart is corroded by selfish ambition, that the energies are stimulated by unworthy vanity, is due entirely to the present organisation of society.*

Presently Owen starts with a new proposal to reconstruct the whole of society upon a similar basis by means of voluntary association, and with aid of Government patronage, so as to replace the system of competition by universal association, and the isolation of the family by communistic life. Thus Owen hoped to remove all vestiges of inequality, to introduce perfect uniformity in the "new moral world," to abolish private property, and to exorcise the evil spirit of envy and the lust of gain, and to bring in the spirit of love and fraternal co-operation instead; to banish the licentious luxury of the rich, and to extirpate the abject misery of the poor, so as to

* "Robert Owen, the founder of Socialism in England," by A. J. Booth, p. 70.

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remove all causes of class hostility, together with many of the inducements to vice prevailing in the "old immoral world."

To complete this work of "social architecture," and with a view "to revolutionise peaceably the minds and practice of the human race," the education of the young from an early age is to be mainly conducted on communistic principles. But knowledge is to be conveyed in a pleasant manner, interspersed with singing, dancing, and other exercises, making learning a delight, and not a task. Rewards and punishments are to be excluded, and the spirit of emulation among the young is to be repressed, as the best means of counteracting the spirit of competition at a later age.

It is interesting to note the contrast between the cold and hard exponent of abstract economy and the warm and genial socialist in the manner of regarding children. Malthus had spoken with frigid indifference of the number of children who came into this world for whom no place was provided at the banquet of nature, and who, as supernumeraries, had to make room for others in the struggle for existence; Owen "considered little children as little guests, to be welcomed with gentle courtesy and tenderness, to be offered knowledge and love, and charmed with song and flowers, so that they might be glad and proud

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that they had come into a world which gave them happiness, and only asked of them goodness."

Thus, by means of an improved system of educating the young; by the creation and multiplication of small centres of industry; by the adoption of united labour, expenditure, and property, and the introduction of equal privileges, the "patriarch of reason" sought to bring about a thorough social reform, and to direct mankind into new paths of prosperity.

His projects were received with applause at first. *The Times* spoke of "his enlightened zeal in the cause of humanity;" the Duke of Kent writes to Owen: "I have a most sincere wish that a fair trial should be given to your system, of which I have never hesitated to acknowledge myself an admirer;" Lord Brougham sympathised with the propounder of this social scheme; the judicial philosopher, Bentham, became actually a temporary ally of the "wilful Welshman;" a committee was appointed, including Ricardo and Sir R. Peel, who recommended Owen's scheme to be tried; it was taken up by the British and Foreign Philanthropic Society for the permanent relief of the working-classes; it was actually presented to Parliament with petitions humbly praying that a Committee of the House might be appointed to visit and report on New Lanark. But the motion

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was lost. The temporary enthusiasm cooled down, and with a temporary return of prosperity the fear of a social revolt was dispelled, and with it the anxiety of removing social evils among the rulers of the country. For this seems to be a general law, affecting the force and direction of such movements, that the ardour of social reform increases directly with the growing magnitude of dangers arising from popular discontent, and diminishes in the inverse ratio to the undisturbed prosperity of the ruling classes. Contemporaneously with royal speeches alluding to the prosperity of trade, and congratulations as to the flourishing appearance of town and country, the voice of Owen is silenced with his declining popularity.

It must be remembered also that he had by this time justly incurred the displeasure of the religious public, by the bold and unnecessarily harsh expressions of his ethical and religious convictions. Those who could distinguish the man from his method, who were fully aware of his generous philanthropy, purity of private life, and contempt of personal advancement, could make allowance for his rash assertions. The rest, however, turned away with pious horror or silent contempt from one who so fiercely attacked positive creeds, and appeared unnecessarily vehement in his denial of moral responsibility.

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Owen set his face to the West, and sought new adherents in America, where he founded a "Preliminary Society" in "New Harmony," which was to be the nucleus of his future society. He intended it at first as a "half-way house, a temporary resting-place, where we can change our old garments and fully prepare ourselves for the new state of existence into which we hope to enter." But, yielding to popular pressure, in the following year Owen agreed to a change in the constitution, in favour of communism, under the title of the "New Harmony Community of Equality." The settlement enjoyed a temporary prosperity, but soon showed signs of decay, and Owen was destined to meet with as many trials in the new as he had encountered discouragements in the old world. He consoles himself with the consideration that—

> The last experiment has made it evident that families trained in the individual system, founded as it is on superstition, have not acquired those moral qualities of forbearance and charity for each other which are necessary to promote full confidence and harmony among all the members, and without which communities cannot exist.

Whilst this struggle for existence on the part of the new society was going on in America, "a series of alternate phases of feverish prosperity and lasting depression" in England were succeeded in 1829 by an utter prostration of industry and consequent reduction

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of wages. Riots and conflagrations prevailed all over the country, machinery was demolished, mills were attacked, and acts of incendiarism were committed everywhere, the ringleaders of the people asserting that "the destroying angel was the best ally they had."

"The simple fact," says Mr. Molesworth, "was that wars, national debt, increase of population, corn laws, maladministration of the poor laws, and other legislation, or hindrance of legislation, had reduced the great mass of the people, and especially the agricultural labourers, to the verge of starvation and despair. They were going mad with misery, and, in their madness, they did mischief by which they themselves were sure to be the first and greatest sufferers." *

Great anxiety was felt among the friends of the people to discover the means for improving their sad condition and averting a social revolution. Co-operation suggested itself as a remedy, and co-operation became now the "religion of industry."

Owen had, on his return from America, undismayed by adverse experiences, become now a warm advocate for co-operation. "The Crisis," edited nominally by him, now appears as an organ of the co-operative movement. Seven hundred societies spread their ramifications all over the country, and the great "apostle of association" in England, with

* Molesworth, "History of England," vol. i. p. 53.

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the intention of striking a final blow against capitalistic, as opposed to co-operative enterprise, establishes the "Equitable Labour Exchange" in London. Its object was to remedy the evils arising from cash payments, to make labour the standard of value, and labour notes, representing so many hours of work, the medium of exchange. This, he thought, would "let prosperity loose upon the country," and dispense with the necessity of retail dealers and middlemen. Crowds rushed to the Exchange, and business there became overwhelming. In one week 16,000 hour-notes, representing in goods so many hours of labour, were issued. Owen, in his sanguine manner, maintained that this discovery "was of more importance than the mines of Mexico and Peru, for it would in a little time make them all rich and independent." The scheme collapsed after a short trial. Owen had to bear heavy losses, which did not disturb his equanimity, although the disappointed hopes to which the undertaking had given rise unfavourably affected, for a time at least, the co-operative movement. With the temporary decline of this movement we observe a tendency towards communistic schemes of social improvement gaining ground among the advocates of co-operation, and among the working-classes generally. Co-operative congresses now begin to adopt socialistic measures.

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Among the regulations of the congress in 1832 we find the following:

1. Let it be universally understood that the grand ultimate object of all co-operative societies, whether engaged in trading, manufacturing, or agricultural pursuits, is *community in land.*

2. To effect this important purpose, a weekly subscription, either in money, goods, or labour, from a penny to any other amount agreed upon, is indispensably necessary to be continued from year to year, until a capital sufficient to accomplish the object of the society be accumulated.

From this it will be seen that English communists materially differed from their brethren on the Continent. To use the words of one of their sympathisers: "They wished equality, but it was *voluntary* equality. It was true they were levellers, but they wished to level up, and not down. *They sought to create and retain fresh wealth for themselves.*" *

Still pamphlets appeared under the title, "Equalisation of Property and the Formation of Communities," a social regeneration society was founded, and Owen demands a "charter of the rights of humanity." Although opposed to Chartism and political agitation, we find him now fraternising with Fergus O'Connor sympathising with trades-unionism, denouncing the aristocracy, and foretelling the total collapse of existing social institutions. This growing intensity of

* Holyoake's "History of Co-operation," vol. i. pp. 187–189.

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socialistic fervour finds its explanations in the increasing suffering of the working people, notwithstanding the accumulation of wealth among those above them. "Our successful industry is hitherto unsuccessful; . . . . in the midst of plethoric plenty the people perish," Carlyle complains about that time. Then, when "a million hungry operative men started up in utmost paroxysm of desperate protest against their lot," Owen, who had spent his energies and fortune in endeavours to improve their condition, goaded on by ill-success and repeated disappointments, now unfurls a new banner of social reform, and, at the head of millions of malcontents, claims the "Magna Charta of social regeneration."

From this date, for nearly twenty years, says Mr. Sargant, one of his biographers, "Owen's proceedings have little to interest people generally." He now only exercises esoteric influences on a small band of followers, and Owenism sinks into a state resembling the later stage of St. Simonism. Owen becomes "our social father;" his "book of the new world" becomes the religious creed of his adherents; Burton Crescent Chapel, the metropolitan church of the new social sect, and from it apostles go forth to "preach in the open air, wherever an audience can be collected," and the burden of their message is this: "Unless ye work, neither shall ye eat."

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To complete the parallel, Owen, in his old age, succeeds in raising a community fund, for organising communities on his new plan, and actually establishing a society, "Harmony Hall," in Hampshire, which, like similar experiments, ended unsuccessfully. As the aged Enfantin had been received by Napoleon III., so Owen was introduced to Queen Victoria, to explain his schemes for social improvement. He was eighty years old when "Harmony Hall" was broken up; but, so far from being discouraged by this last failure, he remained a thorough believer in his own ideas to the end, and continued to issue proclamations and tracts to convince the great ones of the earth and common people of the truth of his social system. In the Exhibition of 1851, he managed to desseminate 60,000 tracts in English, French, and German, and six years later he read before the newly-founded Social Science Association a paper in which he expressed the conviction "that the time would surely come when the population of the world would be governed solely under the influence of universal love and charity; and, divine as these principles were, they were yet the principles of common sense, for governing mankind, and forming the character from birth to death."

Again, in the following year, he appeared on the same platform, but in the very beginning of his

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speech was taken ill and removed to his hotel in Liverpool, whence he started, when sufficiently recovered, to his native country, to die there. "What scenes had the wanderer passed through since last he gazed upon the mountains! Manufacturing days, crowning success, philanthropic experiments, public meetings at the London Tavern, continental travel, interviews with kings, Mississippi valleys, Indiana forests, journeys, labours, agitations, honours, calumnies, hopes, and never-ceasing toil! What a world, what an age, had intervened, since last he passed his native border!"

Such are the reflections of one of his admirers, and we ask ourselves: What were the results of all these hopes and fears, successes and disappointments, labours and sufferings of the social reformer? And we reply: Owen's labours were not in vain, nor his "scheming for the world's necessities" futile.

We owe to him, in a measure, our present improved system of universal education in primary schools. It is he who gave the first impulse to the ten-hours' labour bill, and legislation for the protection of women and children against the cupidity of masters and the unprincipled avarice of their own relations. Model lodging-houses, public baths, ragged schools, and similar philanthropic institutions, having for their object the mental, moral, and material ele-

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vation of the masses, owe their existence to the impetus given to social reform by Owen's socialistic agitation. But it is as the father of co-operation that Owen will be remembered with gratitude and respect by future generations. Co-operation, indeed, had not been without its advocates before Owen recommended it as a means to "place the people in circumstances favourable to their development." But it was he who "carried co-operation into good company," among persons of fortune and influence, and so procured for it a sound footing in its incipient growth. It has entered upon a new phase now, since the Rochdale pioneers and others have advanced it by another stage on the way to final success.

It is to the spread of co-operation that the economist looks as the power for improving the condition of the people, in securing for all the just reward of their exertion without interfering with personal liberty, without endangering private property, without impeding the course of legitimate competition. Based on the principles of justice, veracity, and self-discipline, and requiring and cultivating, as it does, mental and moral qualifications of a high order, co-operation has the tendency of encouraging superior education, the power of self-government, and the exercise of virtuous self-denial among the people. Moreover it promises a pacific solution of some of the social difficulties of

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modern life in creating common interests between employers and employed.

Owen's name will ever be associated with this great movement, and we may say, in the words of Mr. Booth, "if he had never contributed anything else to the good of mankind, that alone would entitle him to be classed among our greatest benefactors."

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CHAPTER VII.

MARLO AND CO-OPERATIVE SOCIALISM IN GERMANY.

IN the same year in which Owen died another champion of co-operative Socialism passed away in Germany, less known as a social reformer, but no less worthy to be mentioned among the number of those who have produced important schemes of social improvement.

Karl Marlo (his real name was Winkelblech) was a Cassel professor, and his work, which he called, with characteristic breadth of view, a "System of Universal Economy," displays all the thoroughness without the proverbial pedantry of the German professor. Not gifted with the glowing imagination of Fourier, wanting entirely the practical business application of Robert Owen, Marlo differs also from both these his contemporaries in not expecting great social changes from a redistribution of property. His social ideal is a confederation of co-operative societies all

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over the world, not, however, to the entire exclusion of individual enterprise, with a view of heightening production, and so increasing the prosperity of all classes in society.

He tells us, in one of the prefaces to his work, what led to his own economic inquiries, and proved a turning-point in his intellectual life.

"In the year 1843 I travelled in Northern Europe. Being engaged upon a technological work, I visited among others the well-known Norwegian indigo factory, at Modum, where the lovely environs so fascinated me that I prolonged my stay for several days. As one morning I was from a hill taking a view of the surrounding neighbourhood, which rivals the Alps in its mountain scenery, a German labourer, undoubtedly recognising in me a fellow-countryman, approached me with the petition to do some commission for him in the fatherland. As I granted his request he became more communicative, and gave me a touching account of his own experience, and the life of penury to which both he and his fellow-labourers were condemned. What is the cause of this, I asked myself, that the paradise spread before me conceals so much hidden misery? Is nature, or man, their real author? Like many other students of nature, I had always given my attention in the workshops of industry to the machinery rather than the

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human beings, to the products of human industry rather than the producers themselves. I remained, therefore, entirely ignorant of the vast amount of misery which lies at the foundation of our varnished civilisation. The convincing words of this labourer made me feel the comparative uselessness of my scientific investigations, and I arrived shortly at a determination in my own mind to investigate the sufferings of our race, their causes and their remedies. In the course of many years I continued my researches most conscientiously, and found the extent of prevailing misery far beyond what I was first led to expect. Poverty everywhere! Among wages labourers and those who undertake work on their own account, among nations in the highest as well as those in the lowest state of industrial advancement, in the large manufacturing towns, the capitals of labour, and centres of luxury, as well as in the hovels of villagers, in the salubrious plains of Belgium and Lombardy, as in the barren mountain heights of Scandinavia; everywhere I met wretchedness and poverty. I discovered, moreover, that the causes of all this are not to be found in nature, but our institutions founded on false economic principles, and from this I concluded that in the rectification of these lies the only hope of recovery. I began to feel convinced that in the present modes of production the

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eradicating of poverty is impossible, that the utmost improvement in technical skill will by no means secure a diffusion of general prosperity; in short, that our civilisation is in such a stage of development that further progress will entirely depend on the progress of economic science, and that the latter on this account is the most important of all sciences for the times. In the course of my investigations the doctrines of Economists, as well as the efforts of Socialists, were known to me in name only; for I avoided a closer acquaintance with them purposely in order to remain, as far as possible, entirely free from any external influences. It was only after I had arrived at my own conclusions, unaided, that I turned to the study of economic literature. From this I gathered that the results to which my own investigations had led me in all essential points, after numerous corrections (although not containing much that was original), departed entirely from the principles laid down in the existing works on political economy. This led to a comparative examination of my own with the prevailing views of others, which only confirmed me more in my convictions. I thought now I might make the attempt of a new system of economy. This accordingly I began in the year 1847, and the first half of my works has only just appeared."

This work was left unfinished at his death. In

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two extant volumes, containing about 2,000 closely-printed pages, we have Marlo's theory of Economic Science, together with a thoughtful and complete survey of previous systems, a scholarly account of historical development of society, as well as a critical review of socialistic literature from Plato's "Republic" to Cabet's "Voyage to Icaria." The practical or constructive portion of the work has been left, unfortunately, incomplete; but this does not prevent us having a very fair view of the author's aims of social reform, and the manner in which he sought to effect them.

What strikes us as the most remarkable feature of his social philosophy is the utter absence of those fantastic pictures of impossible societies, such as the reader has become familiarised with during the perusal of some of the previous chapters. Here we feel ourselves no longer surrounded by the airy phantoms of an Utopian dreamland, but begin to breathe the serener atmosphere of calm thought and to tread upon the sure ground of ascertained facts. Marlo is not without his errors and shortcomings, but his judgment is rarely led captive by his imagination, nor are his conclusions affected by generous sympathies; whilst he is never wanting in the enthusiasm of humanity, and the aspirings after a high social ideal, he never loses sight of the actual condition of things,

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but takes human nature as he finds it in his attempt to improve mankind.

The state of society in Germany was no better than what we saw to have been that of England and France at the same period. In some respects it was worse. "A country of divided interests, rent by dissensions, slow in development, wanting in national independence, in its impotence and infatuation calling itself the land of thought, and yet importing the principles of social organisation from without, imitative and not creative, inspiring the patriots with sorrow and shame."

In no country had the systems of monopoly and stereotyped class distinctions been perpetuated so long and so painfully as there; nowhere had the grinding power of the upper classes, pressing down upon the lower strata of society, been felt so acutely. Attempts had been made to remove the incubus of feudalism in the time of the Reformation, when men like Müntzer endeavoured practically to carry out the theories of More's Utopia, but all such attempts had failed.

Joseph II., influenced by the revolutionary ideas of the eighteenth century, made a futile attempt to introduce social reforms. Prussia created a free peasantry, and liberated the soil from feudal burdens. At a later period, freedom of trade and relaxation of

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the rigid regulations of the guild system followed upon this wise measure of legislative reform. With all this came, as in other countries, wealth and the growth of industry; but with it, too, an unequal distribution of property, a wide gulf between rich and poor, and all these social evils and antagonisms which, aggravated by reactionary legislation and ruinous military systems later on, made Socialism the formidable power we find it to be now in that country.

Ten years before Marlo published his book, the German historian had complained that the factory system had a deleterious influence on the morals of the country, and the anxiety to get rich had produced most baneful effects in all classes of society. "The cares of subsistence are the slow-killing poison emasculating our nation."

The monopolies of the aristocracy, indeed, disappeared to some extent, but in their place came the monopoly of the plutocracy, according to Marlo. And most unsparing is his criticism on this class, who profess to be the Liberals of the day. They "have not," he says, "carried out their principles in any land as yet completely, still the attempts which have been made are sufficient to prove the uselessness of their efforts. They endeavoured to free Labour, but only succeeded in subjecting it more completely under the yoke of Capital; they aimed at setting at

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liberty all Labour powers, and only riveted the chains of misery which held them bound; they wanted to release the bondman from the clod, and deprived him of the soil on which he stood by buying up the land; they yearned for a happy condition of society, and only created superfluity on one hand, and dire want on the other; they desired to secure for merit its own honourable reward, and only made it the slave of wealth; they wished to abolish all monopolies, and placed in their stead the monster monopoly Capital; they wanted to do away with all wars between nation and nation, and kindled the flames of civil war; they tried to get rid of the State, and yet have multiplied its burdens; they wanted to make Education the common property of all, and made it a privilege of the rich; they aimed at the greatest moral improvement of Society, and have only left it in a state of rotten immorality; they wanted, to say all in a word, unbounded liberty, and they have produced the meanest servitude; they wanted the reverse of all they actually obtained, and have thus given a proof that Liberalism in all ramifications is nothing but a perfect Utopia." They must not remain in the possession of a monopoly of wealth and enjoyment. On the contrary, the great movement of social progress is towards panpolism (all having equal rights of self-development), and therefore the power of this new usurper

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must be broken, and everybody must be put into a position of approximate competency and affluence. "The heathenish principle of economy grants to the few enjoyment at the expense of the many; Christian principle demands a moral regard for those natural conditions which ensure general prosperity, with a view to effect the highest possible happiness *for all* in due proportion." The heathenish principle prevailed in the social order of our forefathers. The society of the future, founded on federal principles, utilises what is good in existing institutions, and retains even mediæval modes of organisation where it is desirable, but its general aim and purpose is to organise labour all over the world on the basis of co-operation.

No attempts are to be made to disannul the rights of private property, nor forcibly to abolish private enterprise. On the principle that constitutions are not made, but grow, Marlo leaves the future prevalence of the association to natural development, excepting in the case of agriculture, where he requires the State to make co-operation compulsory. To mitigate the evils of pauperism, he suggests compulsory life insurance. To remove the abuses of speculation and commercial dishonesty, he, with other socialists, recommends the State to become the general negotiator for all commercial transactions;

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and with a view to consolidate the position of the working-classes and assist them in organising themselves into co-operative companies to withstand the encroachments of capitalists, he is inclined to return to the protective systems and guild restrictions of a past age. For these latter suggestions Marlo's ideas are rather retrogressive than progressive. But considering the times he lived in, and the society by which he was surrounded, we have reason to wonder rather at his power of raising himself to the higher standpoint he maintains as a social reformer, than at his occasional lapses into the modes of thought prevalent during that reactionary period when men, tired of the agitation produced by the revolutions, threw themselves helplessly into the arms of despotism.

The chief merit of Marlo consists in his elaboration of a complete system of co-operation on a scientific basis, at a time when Fourier's scheme had become ridiculous, and the early efforts of English co-operation had apparently remained unknown in Germany. What Marlo expects from his system is a mode of production in which all engaged have an interest, as they all share in the profits, and the invidious distinctions between master and servant, between employer and employed, disappear altogether, or dwindle into insignificance. Wages labourers would here become masters in a certain

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sense. They would be members of a co-operative society (not co-operative in consumption only, but in production also), amenable to constitutional laws framed by its members. This he thought was destined ultimately to extend over the whole domain of industry, a system at once more practical and founded on a better scientific basis than the societary communism of Fourier. Thus he hoped the dependent degradation of the masses would gradually disappear, and with it the existing class antagonism. An equable distribution of labour and profit would engender general good-will among all engaged in the industrial process, and supervision of labour become unnecessary; the evils of sudden extension and contraction of certain branches of trade would be mitigated, and the bad results of unlicensed competition would entirely disappear. The use of machinery and other technical appliances would cease from exercising a baneful influence on the mechanics, who, in their corporate condition, would be able to avail themselves, as large capitalists do now, of the benefits of modern discoveries. The creation and preservation of capital would be facilitated, as association would render savings compulsory and prevent enormous waste in private consumption and the cost of labour. The individual struggles, the care and worry in the social beehive,

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could be reduced to a minimum, and the solidity of interests among the different members of the association would call forth a kindly spirit of mutual toleration, and even affection, and the whole process of industry in all its branches would assume a milder and more gentle aspect, and make at last even "drudgery divine."

Marlo does not omit pointing out some of the drawbacks and disadvantages of the system; still, upon the whole he sees in the triumph of federalism the final goal of our present society, and in the mutual conflict and defeat of the advocates of political liberty and social equality, the liberals and the communists, he foresees victory of co-operative principles. Communism would destroy liberty; liberty without protection of the weak against the strong would fail to bring about a comparative equality. Co-operation combines these two elements which are now mutually destructive in affording liberty and equality alike, by means of free combination and equal rights among all members of the co-operative associations.

Marlo died in obscurity, and his work is only now beginning to be studied even in Germany. It contains many warnings and prophecies which have since been but too literally fulfilled; but it also contains hopes and prospects for the human race which are

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slowly being realised. Marlo, as the German co-operative philosopher, deserves an honoured place by the side of Owen, the practical "English apostle of co-operation." The two men were ignorant of each other, working in the same field, having the same object in view, guided by the same hope-star of ameliorating the condition of the people by means of co-operative institutions. The spirit of the age and the circumstances of the times produced in both the same modes of thought. Separated from each other by nationality, training, calling, disposition, and mental characteristics, they yet discovered independently identical means for remedying social evils and reorganising society. Such coincidences are remarkable, and deserve to be noticed. They teach us that a germ of truth underlies all socialistic attempts; that the social ideal, in one form or another, is to be found in the human mind itself; that the various modes of giving it shape and form, according to different circumstances, are the manifestations of the same tendency in all men to realise a social ideal. Men like Owen and Marlo, therefore, deserve well of their species for the honest expressions of such aspirings in the name of their fellow-men, and for their zealous and laborious work, whether it be in the field of speculative social philosophy or in the region of practical social reform.

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CHAPTER VIII.

CABET—"VOYAGE TO ICARIA."

THAT ominous prediction of Sylvain Maréchal, one of the Babouvist conspirators, "The French Revolution is only the forerunner of another revolution, grander and still more solemn, the last of its kind," was almost literally fulfilled in the rising of 1848, half a century after that communist movement had received its "baptism of blood" in the death of Babeuf.

The Revolution of 1789 had removed the last vestige of feudalism, that of 1830 had brought about the extinction of the aristocracy as a social power, but in this third stage of the "ninety years' agony of France" we have the first organised attempt of labour revolting against the "tyranny of capital."

Here, as on former occasions, it was the supine selfishness of the propertied classes which provoked the outbreak of popular discontent. The all-powerful

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plutocracy had turned a deaf ear to the repeated and just complaints of the labouring people against their entire exclusion from political power, and the conversion of the electoral franchise into an engine of class legislation in favour of the rich. They remained insensible to the sufferings of the working-classes, which followed upon a ruinous fall of wages, and so roused the spirit of deadly hatred against property and the government. "The operatives, well-nigh maddened by suffering, readily embraced the doctrines of the socialists, who proclaimed a community of goods . . . . as the ultimate destiny of society."*

All previous attempts to ameliorate their condition had failed, the societary schemes of St. Simon and Fourier had fallen into discredit, Lamartine now demanded of the government "Social Fraternity" in the name of the people. The influence of the socialists had been underrated, as it is not unfrequently, in spite of the solemn warnings of history. They had been contemptuously described as an "imperceptible band of extravagants," and their demands of social reform had remained unheeded. Then came the Revolution.

Cabet's "Voyage to Icaria" was a warning precursor of that event, as Morelly's "Basiliade" had

* Alison's "History of Europe," 1815–52, vol. v. chap. xxx. p. 63.

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been the precursor of the first Revolution; and very often the sentiments of the latter are re-echoed in the former.

"At all times," says Cabet, in the preface to this modern Utopia, "and in every country history shows nothing but troubles and disorders, vices and crimes, wars and revolutions, massacre and murder, calamities and catastrophes. Now, if these vices and misfortunes are not the effect of nature's will, we must seek for a cause elsewhere. And is this cause not to be found in the bad organisation of society? And is not the radical vice of this organisation inequality on which it is based? . . . . Not a moment must be lost to repress this evil by a substitution of equality for inequality."

Community of goods, he maintains, was proclaimed by "Jesus Christ, by all the apostles and early disciples, by the primitive church, and by the Reformation, and by all the philosophers who have been the light and glory of the human species."

In answer to the objection that such a scheme of perfect equality is only a beautiful dream and a magnificent chimera, he says that, on the contrary, a society of this kind may exist and prosper, and in the "Voyage to Icaria" he tries to prove this theory.

Cabet wrote this work in England, where he lived

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as an exile, banished from his country for political offences, after having risen to legal eminence, notwithstanding his democratic and socialistic tendencies. Here in this country the study of More's "Utopia" had converted him, as he confesses, from political Republicanism to a belief in Communism and the "sovereignty of the people." Henceforth he only regards the establishment of the Republic as a preliminary step towards the final introduction of a "definite Communism." And thus persuaded in his own mind, he says: "I wrote the 'Voyage to Icaria' to place before the world the example of a great nation having a community of goods. At the same time I perceived that this community could *not be established after Babeuf's plan, by conspiracy and violence, but by means of discussion, propagandism, by persuasion, and the force of public opinion.*"

For this purpose he paints with glowing colours the results of universal equality in that social romance to which we must now direct the reader's attention.

The imaginary community here described is visited by a mythical English Lord Carisdall, whose supposed impressions and experiences in Icaria form the subject-matter of this volume. It may, in fact, be regarded as the diary of an inhabitant in Dreamland, or as a traveller's note-book, describing scenes and modes of life in Nowhere's Land. The work is

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divided into three parts, the first containing a detailed description of the country and the people, the second their history, and the last giving an account of the principles which lie at the foundation of that universal happiness so much admired by Lord Carisdall.

The situation of the country is most favourable. Chains of mountains enclose it from the north and south; a river in the east and the sea in the west form the remaining boundaries. The territory is divided into a hundred provinces, almost equal in extent and population. Each province consists of six communes, and each commune has its own communal town, eight villages, and a number of farms spread in regular order throughout its whole extent. There is a chief town in the centre of every province, and in the heart of Icaria its capital is situated—the marvel of marvels, a description of which reads like one of the Arabian Nights' stories. It has a hundred streets, which, wide and straight, present a bright and cheerful aspect, superior in every respect to the dingy and lugubrious streets and by-lanes of modern cities. There is nothing to offend the most fastidious taste; there are none of the hideous scenes and grotesque spectacles which meet the eye at every corner in our overcrowded and unhealthy towns; there is an utter absence of the clangour and shrill sound of

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noisy activity in our centres of commerce. All that is disagreeable is kept out of sight and hearing. On the other hand, everything which tends to promote æsthetic culture and rational enjoyment finds a place here. A profusion of art-treasures from the East and West, gems of the classic age and the Renaissance, are collected together and distributed all over the town. Besides, the magnificence of the architecture and the grandeur of public monuments strike the eye at every corner. Nor are there wanting any of the conveniences of speed and easy locomotion, with many additional improvements. "I am delighted," says the imaginary traveller, "with the elegant houses and fine open streets, the excellent taste displayed in the arrangements of fountains, with the magnificence of their public buildings and national monuments. The public gardens and promenades were enchanting, and on the whole, Tyrama (a seaport town in Icaria) was the most beautiful town I have ever beheld."

Everywhere there are signs of affluence and refined taste. The workshops surpass our palaces in salubrity, elegance, and splendour. Order and method are preserved throughout, and work is done with pleasure and precision. The farms and villages even are constructed on the most magnificent scale. "Every yard of ground was cultivated and appropriated to

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some useful purpose," remarks the traveller. "The whole country seemed covered with the green harvest, having vines interspersed and flowery arbours, groves, plantations, farmhouses, and picturesque villages. Here and there flocks were scattered over the meadows, and groups of husbandmen enlivened both hill and dale. The road was extremely level and in excellent order. The footpaths were continuous, and shaded with fruit trees in bloom. We passed farms and villages, crossed rivers and canals. Indeed, the road seemed the continuation of the suburbs of a large town, or an avenue intersecting an immense garden."

Thus the workers in town and country are cheered in their labour by bright and happy surroundings. Work being thus rendered attractive, there is no occasion of enforcing it as an onerous duty. "What do you do with your idlers?" inquires the puzzled traveller. "The idle?" retorts a stonemason philosopher—for even Ministers of State work at the trades during intervals of rest from public duty—"we do not know of any. . . . . How could there be any such among us when work is made so attractive, and when idleness and sloth are as infamous here as theft is elsewhere?" "They are wrong, then," inquires his lordship, "who say in France and England that there always will be *drunkards, thieves, and*

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idlers?" Answer: "They are right as far as these countries are concerned, but they are wrong in the case of such an organisation as that of Icaria."

In fact, the Icarians are as superior to other people as their country surpasses all the other states of the civilised world.

Their religion consists in silent adoration of the great but "unknown God;" in their temples and ceremonial they aim at a noble simplicity of worship. Religious toleration is extended to all creeds; and to prevent the introduction of religious bigotry, the inculcation of positive beliefs to persons under seventeen years of age is strictly prohibited. The civil government is committed to persons elected by universal suffrage, and removable from office at the people's will.

There is neither property nor money, neither buying nor selling. All are equal, all work for the community, which in return provides for all the necessaries of life. All manufactures and industries are national property, and the executive government regulates the process of production and consumption of commodities; it appoints to every man his share of labour, and assigns to every man a due share of personal enjoyment.

As all public functionaries hold only temporary appointments, and are responsible to the public for

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the due performance of their office, and revocable at pleasure, it might be supposed that government under such conditions became irksome and difficult. Not so. In Icaria people are all virtuous; jealousy and hatred, discord and violence, quarrels and conspiracies, robbery and murder, party politics and revolutions, are unknown. Prisons, judges, and capital punishment belong all to a chapter of ancient history. All professions and occupations are esteemed alike, and everyone may select his own sphere of labour. There are no cares of the future to harass the Icarians; there are none of the prejudices which at present render labour repugnant and painful. Everyone performs his appointed task with alacrity and delight. In short, order and plenty, brotherly concord, virtue, and happiness, prevail throughout the land. The citizens are distinguished for their superior intelligence, urbanity of manner, and nobility of character.

All this is not only "an idyl translated into communistic phraseology," but a satire on the French society of the day. The inordinate love of inequality which, in the opinion of Matthew Arnold, has had the effect of "materialising our upper class, vulgarising our middle class, and brutalising our lower class" in this country, prevailed undoubtedly in an exaggerated form in France during the reign of Louis

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Philippe, when the selfish indulgence and material egotism of the rich exasperated the suffering poor, and filled them with envy and animosity, both against their employers and the *bourgeois* king and his Government.

No wonder, then, that a starved proletariat received with joyful acclamations a book which painted the blessings of equality with such alluring colours, and held up the prospect of a future society where capitalists could no longer domineer over the sons of toil, or appropriate to their own advantage the profits of labour. Five editions of the "Voyage to Icaria" appeared in as many months. Labourers too poor to purchase a copy for themselves joined others for the purpose of reading and discussing the book in common. A profound impression was produced, and the general enthusiasm for the author and his system may serve as a measure of the depth of sorrow and suffering among the men, whom such vague promises of impossible social perfection could cheer and sustain in their sunken condition. No wonder that both teacher and disciples, after thus seeking relief from the hard realities of life in "visionary and chimerical expectations of social felicity," sought in the new world that earthly paradise which they found depicted in the "Voyage to Icaria."

Cabet, having failed in his attempt to introduce

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practically the principles laid down in his work by means of legislation in his own country, went with some of his adherents to America, there to found a society after his own heart. Old in years, but young in enthusiasm, he pursued his object with that "grim patience and steadfast unselfishness" which, in the opinion of Mr. Nordhoff, are the necessary characteristics of the would-be founders of communistic societies. The same writer, referring to a pamphlet of Cabet's which he found when visiting the survivors of this colony in the United States a few years ago, and comparing the possible condition of the community with what he actually observed, says: "I turned over the leaves of the pamphlet while wandering through the muddy lanes of the present Icaria, on one chilly Sunday in March, with a keen sense of pain at the contrast between the comfort and elegance he so glowingly described, and the dreary poverty of the life which a few men and women have thus chosen to follow, for the sake of principles which they hold both true and valuable."

The same might be said with still more truth if we compared this small Icarian commune, who "thought themselves prosperous when they were able to build themselves log-cabins, though they were so wretched that comfort must have been unknown among them for years . . . . and lived, and still live,

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in the narrowest way," with the imaginary society visited by Lord Carisdall in his "Voyage to Icaria."*

A gentleman who knew of Mr. Nordhoff's visit then wrote to him: "Please deal gently and cautiously with Icaria. The man who sees only the chaotic village and the wooden shoes, and only chronicles these, will commit a serious error. In that village are buried fortunes, noble hopes, and the aspirations of good and great men like Cabet. Fertilised by these deaths, a great and beneficent growth yet awaits Icaria. It has an eventful and extremely interesting history, but its future is destined to be still more interesting. It, and it alone, represents in America a great idea—rational democratic Communism."

We are prepared not only to deal gently, but even reverently, with the sayings and doings of a man who, with high mental qualifications and noble aspirations, deeply moved by the sufferings of his fellowmen, thus sought a means of escape from their degradation and dependency in the communistic life. Eager to bring about immediate social changes, impatient of the slow process of social amelioration, which, as a student and writer of history, he acknowledged to be a fact, he excogitated a social romance

* Nordhoff, "Communistic Societies of the United States," p. 335.

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in exile which he thought could best pave the way to social reconstruction.

"I cannot describe the pleasure," he says, "I felt when at last I had found a remedy for all the ills of humanity, and I feel sure that, in their mansions and at their banquets, the men who have sent me into exile have not experienced such pure enjoyment as he whom they have banished, as, day by day, he perceived more clearly the dawn of a coming happiness for the human race."

Finding his countrymen unwilling to adopt his scheme, he chose a voluntary exile in following what he considered a higher call to a country he knew not, full of faith in his mission of social regeneration. Conflicts with the climate and other adverse circumstances led to a partial dissolution of the society, and Cabet retired in despair to Missouri in 1856, where he died of a broken heart.

The high motives and misfortunes of the man deserve our most profound respect, while his moderation as a social revolutionist, discarding all violent changes, and leaving the work of reconstruction to be effected by persuasion rather than force, demand a careful consideration of his views in life and society, as well as his suggestions as to the manner of giving effect to his scheme of social improvement.

The existing inequalities of society Cabet regards

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as the survival of man's savage state, when in the prevalence of general ignorance might is right, and he who has the strongest arm secures a monopoly of enjoyment and total immunity from labour. Hence the existence of class privileges, caste systems, war and conquests, domination and proscription, slavery and serfdom. Hence, too, a perpetuation of inequality of rank and fortune even in the higher stages of civilisation; it is the power of the strong exercised against the weak, sanctioned by custom, which is the outcome of a faulty education.

But brotherly love, devotion to the welfare of others, are natural instincts only requiring further cultivation and a close following out of nature's law, according to which all men are brethren. Nature, in her beneficent rule and intelligent guidance, would have all men equal, not only as far as rights and duties are concerned, but also in the enjoyment of material happiness, and she produces all things for common use. Social and political inequality is a transgression of the laws of nature, and has for its result the oppression and misery of thousands to procure for a small minority the means of luxurious indulgence. This creates egotism, ambition, avarice, and a heartless desire of self-gratification on the part of the opulent, and, on the other hand, envy, hatred, and jealousy among the poor. With the

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abolition of private property, and the introduction of Communism, all these evils would cease to exist. Education as well as legislation in favour of a gradual introduction of communistic institutions must prepare the way for it. The power of bequest must be circumscribed, the right of collateral inheritance must be curtailed, progressive taxation, the freedom of the labouring classes from sharing the public burdens, the abolition of military systems, governmental regulation of wages, the fixing of a normal day of labour, and, finally, co-operation on a large scale—all these are to pave the way towards this final consummation. But nothing is to be done by violence and sudden changes contrary to the will of the people. "Let them preach," exhorts Cabet, "to get the principle accepted, to get the transition-measure passed, and so arrive at last at a definitive Communism." In the meantime he says, in his "Credo Communiste:"

"I believe that Communists have no prospect of success unless they reform themselves, and carefully avoid everything that might bring about disunion; let them preach by their example; in the exercise of all the social virtues let them teach and convince their opponents that communism would not produce unhappiness in anyone, but secure the happiness of all."

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He considers fifty years long enough as a transition period for gaining his object. After this, the benefits of the communistic life having been fully recognised, individualism may be done away with, and the process of producing and distributing commodities may be left to the authorities of the community. In the new state, liberty would be in a measure curtailed, all would be subject to uniform laws, and would have to conform to identical modes of life. Literature and the press would be under the control of officials, and the education of the young, after a given period, would be public. Those who distinguish themselves in the arts and sciences, in the pursuit of industry, and the performance of public functions, receive certain honours, and after their demise are received into the Pantheon, the Westminster Abbey of the Icarians.

If we ask what motives, if selfishness is no longer the lever of exertion, will induce the Icarians to perform their duty, Cabet replies: "Brotherly love." If we again inquire who will organise this large human machine, Cabet replies: "The committee, the people, or the law, provide for everything." Self-devotion or emulation in the performance of social duty takes the place of the self-regarding motives which form the moving cause of human activity.

With regard to all such speculations on human

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nature and the prime motors of action on which hinges the whole of Cabet's scheme of social improvement, an eminent French economist has said: "It is not enough to love humanity; we must *know* it." Cabet's benevolent scheme throughout rests on a theory of human nature as it might be rather than as it is. Instead of vigorously dealing with the facts of life, he presents us with the charming picture of Utopia or Icaria, where human beings in their characteristic tendencies, moral qualifications, and ruling principles, resemble as little as possible the ordinary men and women we meet with in everyday life. But whereas he errs in this direction, his opponents are equally at fault in the opposite direction, taking for granted that the sordid selfishness and the prevalent tendency to disregard our social duties in the eager search after individual advancement must needs remain unchanged. In fact, here we see the value of Utopias, in that they hold up a higher ideal of society and prevent a stationary, or rather a stagnant, condition of humanity, satisfied with the base facts of life. They point to a goal of higher moral and material improvement, and so direct man onwards on the way of progress and social reform.

Again, Cabet errs in supposing that nature, in her own productions, teaches perfect equality; for wherever we turn we see inequalities as the result

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of natural law. Position, climate, and hereditary faculties, the ordinary sequence of events, produce inequalities without direct interference of human volition. But, on the other hand, a higher law teaches us the duty of equalising, by just and benevolent measures, these inequalities, and by philanthropic effort and self-denying devotion to the cause of humanity, to diminish them as far as possible.

Cabet says: "I believe nature intended the earth to be possessed in common, and to remain unappropriated, like air, light, and warmth; that partition of the necessaries of life corresponding to individual requirements alone is intended, but that *community of goods is the most natural system.*"

His opponents deny this, averring that Communism takes away the proper stimulus for exertion, and would end in an equality of poverty and wretchedness. Therefore, they say, let the principle of competition continue to be the rule of life; then all, whilst endeavouring to promote their own interests, will indirectly benefit the world at large. They overlook the baneful results of competition, the severity and harshness of the present struggle for existence which sets one section in the human beehive against another, creating in many quarters discontent, which, in its remote consequences, threatens the social peace.

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of Europe. They forget that the great law of social progress implies a gradual advancement from the rule under which the strongest prevail to the final establishment of moral supremacy, under which wealth is equitably distributed by means of intensified production and a wider extension of the comforts of life in the lower strata of society.

Here the economist and the philanthropist meet on the same platform, and indulge in a similar hope. Remembering that competency of means implies a higher culture, a calm and contented frame of mind, and a disposition for reflection on the higher problems of human existence, the social worker for the future well-being of the masses of mankind may not be able to accept the Utopian scheme of Cabet, nor will he be satisfied with the counter proposition of his opponents, who profess themselves quite satisfied with the existing state of things. He would rather select a safe middle course between the extreme Socialists and the extreme egoists, and adopts the language of John Stuart Mill, when he says: "I confess I am not charmed with the ideal of life held out by those who think that the normal state of human beings is that of struggling to get on; that the trampling, crushing, elbowing, and treading on each other's heels, which form the existing type of social life, are the most desirable lot of human kind,

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or anything but the disagreeable symptoms of one of the phases of industrial progress. It may be a necessary stage in the progress of civilisation . . . . but the best state for human nature is that in which, while no one is poor, no one desires to be richer, nor has any reason to fear being thrust back by the efforts of others to push themselves forward." *

* "Principles of Political Economy," book iv. chap. vi. § 2.

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CHAPTER IX.

LOUIS BLANC'S "ORGANISATION OF LABOUR."

FRANCE has witnessed many strange scenes in the various revolutionary acts played out on her soil, but one of the most remarkable was this—when a working man suddenly broke upon the Assembly sitting in the Luxembourg and demanded, in the name of a hundred thousand armed proletarians waiting outside, "the rights of labour." This historical hall, in which the haughty peers of France had before held their session, was now occupied by a provisional government which called itself the humble servant of the people, and the members of which, from their seats in the house, addressing the men in their blouses at the door as "our dear friends," passed in haste, and under the influence of popular excitement, that astounding decree on the 25th of February, 1848: "The Provisional Government of the Republic binds itself to guarantee the means of livelihood to the labourer

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by work, and binds itself to procure work for all citizens."

One of the most prominent members of this assembly was Louis Blanc, historian and political writer, the famous author of the "Organisation of Labour." The principles of this publication, originally addressed to the rich, exhorting them to make the cause of the poor their own, were now to be carried out in practice when the author had become the president of the commission appointed by Government to improve the condition of the labourers.

If at any time there was a chance of success for such a scheme, now was the opportunity. St. Simon and Charles Fourier had ineffectually appealed to the State for public aid in their schemes for social improvement. Cabet's hopes had been disappointed on this head when he left, as we saw in the previous chapter, his country in disgust on the very eve of the Revolution. It was reserved for Louis Blanc, a high-minded, thoroughly earnest, able, and moderate Socialist, to submit his scheme as a Government measure to the commission over which he presided, and to induce the State to organise labour with a view to finally abolishing competition, to extirpate misery, to raise the people's morals, to forestall the return of commercial and industrial crises, to secure labour for all hands and bread for all mouths, and so

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to diffuse comfort and happiness among all classes of society. Hence the Government assumed the title of the "Ministry of Progress," and proposed to itself the task of passing the following measures:

1. To procure labour for all who are out of employ, for "wherever the certainty of living by labour does not result from the very essence of social institutions, there iniquity is predominant."

2. The transformation of the Bank of France into a State bank, to remove the evils arising from the abuses of the credit system, and the crushing power of the plutocracy.

3. The control by the State of all railways and insurance companies and savings banks.

4. The erection of public workshops and general stores.

5. The foundation of agricultural colonies on co-operative principles.

Measures Nos. 1 and 4 were actually passed, to the great consternation of the plutocratic party, but were revoked six months later by a decree of the "Constituante," a measure which had for its results the rise of the populace, the fighting for several days behind barricades, and the final subjection of the people by force of arms under General Cavaignac, and the ultimate establishment of the Second Empire.

But we must return to Louis Blanc, and take a

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rapid glance at the man and his doctrine who was the ruling spirit of the "Ministry of Progress." Louis Blanc, the idol of the Parisian proletariat, is a man of good family and a distinguished scholar of the Academy of Arras. He began his career as a journalist in Paris, and has since gained for himself a considerable reputation as a literary man and social innovator of superior culture and philosophical attainments. Here follows part of a description of the condition of society after the Second Revolution, by Louis Blanc, which has been compared by a competent writer to one of the finest passages of Gibbon. It may serve both as a sample of Louis Blanc's style, and as a true, though sad, picture of the social condition of the labourers which he set himself to improve.

"Never had society been abandoned to such disorders as those which now afflicted it under the direction of its official guides. There was an incessant strife of masters for the command of the market—of workmen for the command of employment; of the masters against the workman for the fixing of wages —of the workman against the machine destined to destroy, by superseding him; such was, under the name of free competition, the picture of the situation of France, viewed in an industrial aspect. What a picture of social disorder. The great capitalists

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gaining the victory in the strife, as the strong battalions in the field of battle, and the principle of *laissez faire* leading to results as ruinous as the most odious monopolies; the great manufacturers ruining the small, and the great merchants the lesser; usury by degrees gaining possession of the soil—*a modern feudality worse than the old*—independent artisans giving place to those who are mere serfs; capital engulfing itself with shameless avidity in the most perilous undertakings, all interests armed the one against the other. . . . . Turn to the working-classes, is their condition more encouraging? The proletarian servant of a master-workman seeking, in a crisis, his bread by begging and revolt; the father of the workman going, at sixty years of age, to die in a hospital; his daughter at sixteen prostituting herself to gain a livelihood; his son doomed to breathe, from seven years of age, the contaminated air of great workshops, to add to the earnings of the family; the improvidence of misery, and the proletaire menacing the kingdom with an inundation of beggars! Such was the material condition of society. On the other hand, so far as their moral condition was concerned, no attachment to traditions; the spirit of inquiry, denying everything, and yet affirming nothing, and acknowledging no other religion but the love of gain. . . . . There you see, every

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morning at five, at the doors of the factories, a crowd of pale, sickly children, with downcast eyes and livid cheeks, walking with bent backs, like old men. The social system, founded on competition, is to such a degree cruel and insensate, that it not only stifles the intelligence and depraves the disposition of the poor man's child, but it even withers up and extinguishes in them the principle of life."*

Such was the state of things immediately after the Second Revolution, which had, if possible, grown worse towards the approach of the Third. A gentleman visiting some of the barricades in 1848, asked one of the men why he was engaged in this dangerous occupation. The man folded his arms and looked at him for some moments, and then said: "Because I starve. I have a wife and four children. I receive at the mayoralty 11*d.* a day. That is not enough to buy bread for us, cheap as bread is. Come home with me, and you shall see for yourself. Afterwards I will return to the barricade. I am hungry, but I will not eat; I will get killed." The gentleman went home with him and found things as they had been described. The man returned to the barricade.†

In this alarming increase of poverty and wretched-

* Alison, "History of Europe, 1815-52," vol. v. chap. xxix. 4, p. 173, *et seq.* † Sargent, "Social Innovators," p. 376.

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ness Louis Blanc sees the greatest national misfortune, and since he regards competition as the root of the evil, he would replace the competition of private enterprise by the State organisation of labour as a temporary measure, at least, until the people shall have been duly prepared for co-operation and free combination among themselves. He tries, on homœopathic principles, to cure an evil by the introduction of its similar into the body-politic, "to remove competition by the means of competition, to expel the competition of individuals by the competition of State organisation with private enterprise."

He makes society responsible for the welfare of its poorest members, and as capitalists and the internecine competitive struggles of the representatives of capitalism have introduced all these social disharmonies, he aims at their gradual, though not violent, extinction. He would make the State sole capitalist and chief creditor of the nation, and let the public purse supply the means and ways for carrying on the work necessary for the maintenance of the community.

He distinguishes three stages in the historical development of social arrangements. First comes the era of authority, during which men are organised by compulsion (slavery and feudalism); then comes

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the era of individualism, or personal liberty, the rule of competition and free contract, where all are permitted to do as they please, and the poor are allowed to starve without let or hindrance; last of all comes the period of fraternity and free combination among the people, fostered by State intervention. The binding power of authority was demolished by the Revolution. The present state of *laissez faire, laissez aller*, is a state of anarchy, during which an irregular conflict of interests prevails, preventing all healthy social cohesion, and leaving room for the unrestrained license of egotism. The time has come, he thinks, for the State to interpose to unite the isolated social units, to create for them a common rallying-point, to guide and protect them during the first effort of conducting the business of life on the principles of fraternal love.

To give effect to these ideas, Louis Blanc shows the evils of competition on the condition of the working-classes:

"What is competition as far as the labourers are concerned? It is work put up to auction. An employer wants a man. Three men present themselves, and are asked their terms. One demands three francs a day, for he has a wife and children to maintain. Another has a wife, but no children, and will take two francs and a half. A third, who

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has neither, is satisfied with two francs. He gets the preference. What becomes of the other two? They cannot starve or steal. Even the successful competitor is not sure of his place. A fourth, more powerful in endurance, able to do without food for two days in the week, can offer work at a cheaper rate still, and is accepted by the master. Who, then, is so blind as not to see that under the empire of unlimited competition wages must reach their lowest ebb, as a matter of fact, without any exceptions?" How is this to be remedied? Let Louis Blanc reply in his own words: "We desire, then, that labour should be so organised as to cause the suppression of misery; not merely in order that the physical sufferings of the people should be mitigated, but also, and above all, that everyone should recover his self-esteem; that excessive wretchedness should cease to smother the noble aspirations of thought and the enjoyment of a legitimate pride; that room might be found for all in the dominions of education and intelligence; that no one any longer should be enslaved and absorbed by watching a revolving wheel; that no child should be transformed into a means of augmenting the wages of a family. . . . We desire that labour should be organised, that the soul of the people . . . be no more crushed and corrupted under the tyranny of events." "Government should

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raise a loan, which is to be applied to the erection of social workshops in the most important branches of national industry. During the first year after the establishment of these workshops, the Government should regulate the hierarchy of functions. After the first year a change should be made. The workmen, having had time to appreciate each other, and all being, as we shall see, equally interested in the success of the association, the ruling powers might be allowed to be committed to those appointed by a general election.

"An account is to be taken every year of the net profit, and this is to be divided into three parts, one-third to be distributed equally among all members; another to be set apart for the old and infirm, and for the mitigation of crises occurring in any of the other branches, each branch being compelled to assist the rest; the third portion is to be applied to the purchase of new instruments of labour for those who desire to join the association, so that it may be extended indefinitely.

"Every member should be at liberty to dispose of his wages as he chose, but the evident economy and undoubted excellence of life in common would soon convert the association of labour into a voluntary association of wants and pleasures.

"Capitalists would be invited to join the asso-

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ciation, and would receive interest on the principal invested, which interest could be guaranteed to them out of the budget; but they would share the profits only in the character of labourers."

The social workshop once set going, Louis Blanc hopefully suggests "it is not difficult to divine the result. In every leading trade, that of machinery for example, or that of cotton, silk, printing, there could be a social workshop competing with a private business. Would the contest be a long one? No; because the social workshop would have over every private business the advantage which results from living in common, and from a mode of organisation in which all workmen have an interest in quick and excellent production."

It will be seen that according to these regulations, everyone was to receive an equal share, irrespective of their ability to work, contrary to our received notions that everyone is to be rewarded according to the use he makes of his capacities and talents. Louis Blanc defines the social law of his improved society to be as follows: "*Everyone to work according to his capacity, and to receive the means of enjoyment according to his requirements.*" "The day will come," he says, "when it will be recognised that he who has received from God more strength and intelligence owes more to his fellow-men in proportion. Then it will

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be the duty of genius and its merit to prove its legitimate supremacy, not by the magnitude of tribute it levies on society, but by the grandeur of the service it renders to society. What must be aimed at by the superiority of aptitudes is *not so much the inequality of rights as the inequality of duties.*"

Such was Louis Blanc's scheme for the "organisation of labour." Whatever may be thought of it, we cannot but respect the motive of its projector, and admire the earnestness and eloquence of his appeals.

The workshops were duly established, but, as we have already mentioned, were closed six months after by the order of the newly-established authorities. It is impossible to say what would have happened if a fair trial had been given to this new social scheme. It is unfair to argue, as some have done, that because the scheme was afterwards tried by one or two small private establishments and failed, that, therefore, failure must of necessity have attended the Government scheme, with all the resources of a great country at its disposal. We are inclined to believe that the scheme in itself was highly impractical, but we cannot help, at the same time, admiring the moral heroism and the earnest enthusiasm of the man who, with considerable forethought and moderation, proposed a scheme which sought to strike out a safe middle course between a thoroughgoing Communism

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and the faulty societary projects of his predecessors. He had declared to the delegates of the Parisian labourers the guiding principle of regenerated society: "Labour according to aptitudes, remuneration according to requirements." The terms of the proposition show the practical difficulties of carrying out such an ideal. If the rule, "liability to work in proportion to labour capacity, and enjoyment in proportion to requirements," be the rule of this new society, who is to measure the capacities of each individual, and to circumscribe his wants? What is to prevent an excess of requirements over the powers of production in the society itself? "Everybody," it has been well said, "has infinite desires, and this innate desire for acquisition, this noble insatiableness of man, which allows of no limits, is the very incentive of all historical development." Hence the impossibility of providing for all the needs of suffering, groaning, and yet aspiring humanity by State regulations.

Again, who is to guarantee the unswerving wisdom of the officials appointed for this task, and secure them against mismanagement? What is to prevent this mutual assurance system, and the certainty of finding provision under all circumstances, having the most deplorable effects in slackening exertion and encouraging indifference as to results

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in the members of such a community, where all the responsibility rests with the authorities? What, then, will be the prospects of the new society? If force be applied, it becomes a compulsory Communism without a shadow of liberty; if not, then anarchy and a final social dissolution threaten to follow. On these grounds, then, we cannot regard Louis Blanc's proposals otherwise than in the light of a federal Utopia, which presupposes a moral standard and a moral courage of self-denial among the members of his society, such as we rarely meet with among the most elevated heroes of goodness and truth who have adorned mankind.

The merit, however, of Louis Blanc's suggestions consists in his foreshadowing a system of co-operation on higher moral principles at a period of social decay. He saw only the unrestrained propensities of egotistical rapacity among the rich and degrading wretchedness among the poor. "Society is shaken to its very foundations owing to the too long application of a subversive principle. Trades ruined and crying for assistance; workshops in confusion; interests at war; workmen and masters divided by daily disputes; undertakings suddenly stopped; State interference loudly claimed by the proprietors of factories; State protection invoked with anguish or anger by a host of operatives driven to the last shift—such is the

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spectacle," says Louis Blanc, in a document issued by his Luxembourg Commission, "which has brought to our notice the system of competition reduced to the necessity of giving a formal account of its miseries."

The statement may be somewhat rhetorical and overcharged, still we can easily understand how sanguine a theoriser, with the enthusiasm of humanity kindling his zeal in the cause of his suffering fellow-men, would rush to extremes in his endeavour to adopt measures for their recovery. "Everything impels, and is impelled, towards the principle of association—the saving system, which will sooner or later be blessed by those who now decry and calumniate it," cries hopefully Louis Blanc, and this hope may yet perhaps find its fulfilment in the distant future. In the meantime the transition from competition to co-operation cannot be effected as rapidly and effectually as he imagined, whether with or without State help.

But Louis Blanc deserves high consideration from true friends of the people for the conception and statement of an advanced moral principle, which must form the basis of any possible higher state of civilised society in the future; the duty of regarding the common interests of all in preference to pure and undisguised self-interest as the ruling spring of human

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action. Desire to increase the happiness of others as contrasted with the desire of self-gratification—this is the standpoint which regards society as a family in which all take an interest in the welfare of the several members, especially in the case of those whose weakness and infirmities require special sympathy. Not "everyone for himself," but "looking also on the things of others," is the principle of true Socialism. And this is the standpoint of the true social reformer who looks forward to a distant future, when, to use the expression of an eminent scientist of the present day: "Social duty will be raised to a higher level of significance, and the deepening sense of social duty will, it is to be hoped, lessen, if not obliterate, the strifes and heartburnings which now beset and disfigure our social life."*

* Professor Tyndall, in "The Fortnightly Review," November, 1877, p. 617. So, too, Lange in his great work on the History of Materialism, after pointing out the disastrous social effects of pure individualism, egotism, and what he terms Ethical Materialism, says that in the present the progress of society lies in the direction of a growing sense of common duty as distinguished from the simple duty to oneself."—*Lange, "Geschichte des Materialismus," vol. ii. p. 476.*

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CHAPTER X.

PROUDHON'S CRITICAL SOCIALISM.

THE following memorial was sent in by a youth of humble means to the trustees of an exhibition in the Academy of Besançon, in 1837: "Born and reared among the working-classes, attached to them by ties of affection, but chiefly by reason of common sufferings and hopes, it would be my greatest joy if I were selected by the Academy to work perseveringly, with the aid of philosophy and science, with all the energies of will and intellect, to bring about the physical, moral, and intellectual improvement of those whom I am glad to call my brothers and companions; to be able to spread among them the seeds of a doctrine which I regard as a moral law."

He received the exhibition, and three years later endeavoured to carry into effect the promise thus

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given by publishing another memorial, written on the theme proposed by the Academy, "On the Economic and Moral Results of the Law of Equal Division of Property among children produced hitherto and likely to be produced in the future of France," under the title, "What is property?" And the startling answer to this question is this, "Property is theft," an expression which, although not as original as Proudhon imagined, came with an air of originality upon the astonished world then, and has since become the key-note of subsequent socialistic utterances. "I have nothing else on earth that I can call my own," remarks Proudhon, "except this definition of property; but I consider it as precious as the millions of Rothschild, and I venture to say that its discovery will be found to be the most considerable event in the reign of Louis Philippe."

Nevertheless, Proudhon is neither a Socialist nor a Communist; he is simply a sceptical economist. Communism, according to him, is only a caricature of property, the religion of despair. "Hence, away from me!" he exclaims, "ye Communists, your presence is my horror, and the sight of you is my disgust!" Socialism fares no better; it has been condemned long since by Plato and More in a single word: "Utopia: nowhere, chimera.". . . . He des-

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pises Fourier and Louis Blanc, and speaks of the latter as colour-blind, both as to logic and political economy—"an inconsistent *doctrinaire*."

Louis Blanc had eloquently dilated on the "Organisation of Labour;" Proudhon can see nothing but startling contradictions in the practical application of economic laws, which he regards as the organisation of misery. He belongs to no political party in particular, and prides himself on the name of "Anarchist,"—not because he loves anarchy, but because he despises all existing social laws. The enemy of every sect, the irreconcilable opponent of every system, he may be regarded as the destructive genius of Socialism, who judges without mercy, and condemns without pity every scheme advocated both by the apologists and opponents of our present social systems. He is the incarnate spirit of negative criticism, whose chief aim is denial and destruction. The study of social questions, which had inspired his predecessors with pleasing hopes and noble aspirings in the cause of humanity, lands Proudhon not in Utopia, but in the dreary desert of social scepticism and despair.

We feel in examining his writings that we have reached the last stage of pre-scientific Socialism—the era of decay in Utopian literature—*the critical period.* Proudhon forms the connecting link between the old

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order and the new, between empirical and scientific Socialism.

The nations of Europe had now undergone their full course of primary education in the three "R's"—the Revival of learning, the Reformation, and the Revolution. They had now reached that state of mental emancipation which comes with a riper age, and with it comes the exercise of the critical faculty. Now Socialism, always moving with the times, and reflecting the advanced opinions of the age, had reached the same stage of development. Campanella and More, together with the Socialists of a later date, were now on the point of being succeeded by the classic writers on Socialism belonging to the German school, the disciples of Hegel, and the critical philosophy of that country.

Proudhon, whose metaphysical studies had brought him into contact with the leading doctrines of this school of thought, thus serves, as a connecting link between France and Germany, the ancient and the modern socialistic philosophy. True to his character of analytical critic, he takes for his motto the device: "Destruam et reedificabo." His aim is first to destroy and then to reconstruct society. The power of capital, and with it the props of society founded in property, the spiritual and temporal powers in Church and State, must be abolished. He is by no means as

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thoroughgoing in his reconstruction of the society of the future; its foundation is laid on a very uncertain basis, and its superstructure reared, if we may be allowed to speak figuratively, in a misty atmosphere, so that we cannot see clearly the outlines of his social architecture through the haze of metaphysical disquisition and obscuring clouds of logical contradiction. Justice, he maintains, is the first fundamental law of social philosophy, but justice demands equality. Where there is private property there can be no equality, therefore private property must be abolished. "The man of property is a thief . . . . it is Cain who kills Abel . . . . a bandit, a brigand, a pirate infesting land and sea, a vulture fixing his eyes on the prey, holding himself ready to pounce upon it and devour it," &c. &c.

Henceforth, with the abolition of private property there are to be no more rents to be paid to exacting landowners, no more interest to extortionate usurers; the land and capital are to be free, and production made easy and accessible to all. The workers of society are to be put into possession of the necessary implements of labour gratuitously, but the drones are to be extinguished, and the black mail levied by them on the industrial portion of the community, by whose exertions they exist, is to be levied no longer. But although the proprietors are to be dispossessed,

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possession is not to be done away with altogether. In fact, Proudhon "founded possession upon the ruins of property." Everybody is to possess an equal share in the soil and the instruments of labour, and is to be allowed not only to enjoy the produce of his own work himself, but also to bequeath it to his next heir. Only the accumulation of property is forbidden. Those who possess anything—and all will possess something in this society of the future—only hold their possession in trust, and not as absolute property. He dwells with emphasis on the fact that real property is not absolute, a fact brought out very prominently by Mr. T. E. Cliffe Leslie, as affecting landed property in this country, at the present moment—viz. that "the land itself belongs by law to the State; the highest interest in it which any subject can possess is a tenure in fee under the Crown; nor can the Crown either create a higher estate or absolve the existing landowners of the condition of tenure."*

If we inquire how legalised possession and bequest on the one hand, and equality on the other, are to be reconciled, and all equitable arrangements in society are to be accomplished, Proudhon replies pretty

* T. E. Cliffe Leslie, "Land Systems," p. 120, where this note is added: "The first thing the student has to do is to get rid of the absolute idea of ownership. Such an idea is quite unknown to the English law. No man is in law the absolute owner of lands, he can only hold an estate in them."—*Williams on the Law of Real Property.*

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much in the same style as Campanella. All economic measures of this sort requiring final settlement are referred to a section of the Academy of Sciences, or the lawyers who, "henceforth disengaged from the false principle of property, will describe new laws to pacify the world." These learned men of the long robe he accuses of desiring naught but "collecting proprietary rubrics and legalising theft," in his own day. It implies a strong faith in their ultimate conversion to commit to them, conjointly with the aforesaid economic section of the Academy of Sciences, the regulation of the laws of possession and the redistribution of property which Campanella had entrusted to the Grand Metaphysician and his court of assessors. Again, if we ask how absolute equality can be maintained without any violation being done to natural inclinations, and without any interference with the freedom of will, he replies in the vague manner of Fourier. After the universal cataclysm of the Revolution, he says: "Order will reappear of *its own accord* in the midst of ruins; interests *will adjust themselves* to a proper equilibrium; and so social harmony will be finally realised."

This is a by no means satisfactory solution of a great practical difficulty. Proudhon, who could apply most effectually the dialectical dissolvent of negative criticism to societies and systems generally, was

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not equally happy in formulating his own positive proposals for regenerating the world. He boasted, indeed, to have discovered a more powerful sign in the heavens than the Cross of St. Constantine, and, playfully noticing the similarity of the sign of the cross + with the mathematical plus sign, he remarks that this + was to be eclipsed by the = (the sign of equality), and that by this new sign he would conquer all the social difficulties and economic contradictions by which he saw himself confronted. But his method was as visionary and vague as probably was the miracle to which he thus ingeniously refers.

Of a similar unsubstantial character was the suggestion for a public credit bank, which he invites the capitalists to support, in order to save society.

Here loans are to be obtained without interest by enterprising labourers to assist them in the production of commodities, and so liberating them from their utter dependency on the disposers of capital. Here, too, as in the case of Robert Owen's "National Labour Equitable Exchange," all exchanges of commodities were ultimately to be effected by means of labour notes, so as to secure consumers and producers against the present evils of a vacillating standard of values and prices, and to eliminate gradually our wasteful and dishonest modes of barter and exchange, without cash payments and through the medium

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of wages, interest, and profit. Thus the values of commodities, no longer left to blind chances or dishonest inclinations of interested parties, are to be effected by authority. At the same time, inconsistently enough, Proudhon objects to the State monopoly of credit. Hence he wants this credit bank to be maintained by voluntary subscription, so that at last, by slow, gradual reduction of the rate of discount, no interest will be charged at all. In this manner he hopes to remove the evils of our present credit system, which he regards as one of the most obnoxious excrescences of capitalistic competition, confirming and consolidating the iron rule of the heartless plutocracy. The leadership of capital and the impotence of the labourer, without means to produce for himself independently, are, in the opinion of Proudhon, at the foot of all the distress among the working-classes, and the cause of all the crying inequalities of society. The dissatisfaction engendered thereby requires a constantly increasing budget to cover the expenses of maintaining a strong body of police, armies, and other public functionaries, to keep the people in order. "The immense organisation of heightening the prices of circulating commodities in the shape of rent, fines, profit, discount, deductions, commission, premium privileges, monopolies, is accompanied and supported by a staff of

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police, an army, criminal courts, and even church establishments (a sort of spiritual police)—in a word, the *budget*. The consequences are parasitical excrescences, luxury, commercial anarchy, fraud, inequality of fortunes, pauperism, vagabondism, prostitution, theft, manslaughter, and murder; the palliations of this system are public benevolence, Christian love, and philanthropy."

Property thus secured and enjoyed at the expense of our less favoured brethren, in Proudhon's estimation, is no better than theft.

At the same time he guards himself in using this expression by the explanation that he does not accuse individuals here and there as thieves, but the whole system of society founded on property of which both those who possess property and those who do not are the unwilling victims. Whilst he thus characterises "The man of property, who as the exclusive master and absolute sovereign of any instrument of production, claims to enjoy the product of this instrument without himself using it," he also says in another place, "Even I and my publisher are thieves," as belonging to the class of speculators, or, in other words, conforming to the prevailing rules and customs of the commercial world. In answer to this Blanqui, his friend and apologist, reminds him that all the evils complained of may, indeed, arise

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from our system of conducting the world's business, but that to avoid these evils we must reform, not abolish, society; we must cure the disease, not kill the patient.

Such moderate counsels, however, were rejected by Proudhon. He wants another revolution, not a partial reformation. By a union of the proletarians and royalty he hopes to break the power of the moneyed classes, the hated *bourgeoisie*; and in doing so he anticipates Lassalle in advocating what is now called the project of "State Socialism," a project which at one time is said to have received the partial approbation of Prince Bismarck.

The moving principle of the future society is not to be, as now, egotism, but reciprocity. Further development in social morality and religious sentiment will lead to the recognition of the Divine law, "Love thy neighbour as thyself."

This is to be the guiding rule of any future perfect or happy society. "If we had always remained true to this law of love, there would have been no rich and poor, happiness and labour would go together, society would have continued perfect. It is selfishness which destroys equality. Individualism must be displaced by the association of mankind. In a society where the law of reciprocity prevails, the slavery machines will be abolished, the crises of

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commerce will be avoided, competition itself will cease to be a curse, and monopoly even becomes a security for all. The necessity of mutual exchanges between one nation and another will establish a true solidarity of mankind, together with political and social equality. By means of a system of public education, an equality of capabilities, as well as of duties, will in course of time be developed, and so a society will arise renovated in its conscious power of justice, completeness, and virtue, and bearing within itself the promise of peace for future generations." The value of Proudhon's writings is twofold—negative and positive.

His trenchant criticism of previous impracticable schemes of social improvement cleared the air and left room for a more sober consideration of social problems among socialists themselves. Self-knowledge is the most powerful dissolvent of illusions, and in the critical socialism of Proudhon we have the first approach towards this γνωθι σεαυτὸν of socialism. This sobering effect of experience and self-criticism may be traced in the rapid change which has come over the minds of French socialists of the present day, who are by no means liable any longer to be allured by such dreams of social amelioration as were indulged in by the contemporaries of Fourier and Saint Simon. The subjects discussed and the speeches

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made at the Congress held early this year in Lyons,* were of no wild or visionary order. They might form subjects of consideration for the British Association and the Social Science Congress.

On the other hand the Socialist agitation of Proudhon and his contemporaries, connected as it was most intimately with the Revolution of 1848, has not been without some important and even beneficent positive results *indirectly*. The very fact of awakening terror and dismay among the propertied classes of Europe led to the formation of many benevolent institutions and societies which had for their object the removal of just causes of discontent among the working-classes.

Thus under the paternal government of Napoleon III. the condition of the working-classes was much improved, and the class-antagonism which had produced three revolutions ended in a temporary truce, so that both as to its internal as well as its external relations that astute ruler could say of his government, "The Empire is Peace."

In Germany the opposition to reactionary govern-

* The following were the subjects discussed on the occasion referred to:—1. Woman's work; 2. Trades unions and co-operative societies; 3. Industrial crises, strikes, and lock-outs; 4. Education (including technical); 5. Representation of workmen; 6. Insurance funds for the sick and superannuated; 7. The relation of agriculture and manufactures; 8. Vagrancy and vice in cities; 9. Boards of arbitration.

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ment and "functionarism" created a revolutionary storm, and with it an earnest desire among the higher classes to alleviate the condition of the poor by acts of private and public philanthropy. The cry for State-help was met by judicious encouragement of self-help, and kind-hearted sympathy came to the rescue of the struggling operatives, to save them from the allurements of socialistic agitation. If Proudhon had suggested, among other measures subversive of society, the creation of a central bank, with public credit, to assist the destitute operatives, Shultze Delitzsch, in his efforts to found credit banks and mutual credit societies, and in his noble-minded efforts to encourage co-operation (to the successful issues of which we hope to return on a future occasion), sought to supply the same need by less revolutionary but more practical means.

So, again, in England, the French social revolution of 1848 not only gave a new direction to Chartism,* but also roused into action that earnest band of Christian Socialists, with Maurice and Kingsley at their head, who, in their manly and

* "The Revolution of Feb. 24th, 1848, in France, followed by a momentary triumph of Republican principles in that country, gave an immediate and enormous impulse to the Chartist agitation in England, and the more so because it occurred at a time when the working-classes here were in a state of great suffering."—*Molesworth*, "*Hist. of Eng.*," *vol. ii. p.* 294.

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sympathetic manner of writing and speaking, sought to awaken interest on the part of the toilers of society. Thus, whilst contributing largely towards improving their condition, they were also successful in teaching them that Christianity is the true friend of the poor, and that the ideas of equality, liberty, and fraternity are in their legitimate bearings, by no means irreconcilable with the teaching of the Christian Church.*

It is also owing to the exertions of these pioneers that the public mind has been diverted into that wholesome channel of legislative reform in favour of the poor which is the just pride and glory of this kingdom.

Such have been some of the indirect results of the socialistic revolution of 1848. Revolutions, like earthquakes, are productive of much mischief; not only producing cataclysms in the country where they occur, but also affecting distant lands wherever their vibrations are felt. Still, they are not productive only of unmixed evil; they have a purifying effect on society, just as, after the earthquake, upon the ruins of the shattered town a new Lisbon rose, more beautiful and perfect in all its parts, built on a more solid foundation. So, too, where consternation is produced in distant parts by the vibrations of the

* See prefatory memoir by Thomas Hughes in new edition of "Alton Locke," p. xxxiii. and *passim.*

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social earthquake, which cause the pillars of society to shake, there, too, the same causes produce caution and a very careful re-examination of the imperfect foundation. Evil, disastrous, as were some of the results of these three great revolutions and their socialistic accompaniments which we have now considered in order, they have also produced great and lasting effects for good, which may be productive of still greater benefits in the future. The nations of Europe have been taught that the foundations of social systems are not as secure as some would lead us to suppose; rulers have been warned to watch the signs of the times, and to think not only of repairing the walls, but, if needs be, to look to the foundation of the social edifice, with a view to strengthen and improve the society of the future.

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CHAPTER XI.

LASSALLE AND GERMAN SOCIALISM.

IN the last chapter we prepared the reader's mind to bid farewell to Arcadia and the fair scenes of Romantic Socialism, and to ascend with us the bleak heights of more rigorously scientific schemes of social improvement. But before we finally arrive "on the heights," we shall, in ascending, not be without some fair glimpses of Utopian landscapes, led as we are by so genial a guide as Ferdinand Lassalle.

Lassalle, his immediate connection with abstract Socialism on the one hand, and his work as a controversialist, agitator, and the leader of the Social Democracy in Germany on the other, will form the subject-matter of this and the next chapter, whilst Karl Marx and the International will form the concluding subject of this volume.

Properly speaking, the real intellectual leader of this movement was Rodbertus, a ripe scholar, a

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country gentleman, a member of the National Assembly in 1848, and as such, the leader of the Left Wing—the Constitutional Opposition—who enjoyed the honour of being Prussian Minister just for one day and then retired into the solitude of private life to pursue his economic studies.

In the region of pure speculation he is one of the foremost among scientific socialists in Germany. Following the strictly abstract modes of the English economists, cordially accepting their theory that labour is the sole source of economic values or valuable commodities, he, though himself a Conservative in social politics, and an opponent to revolutionary measures, led the way unintentionally to the extreme denunciations of capital, and the extravagant claims for labour which lie at the foundation of all recent socialistic schemes. A believer in social evolution, Rodbertus anticipates a slow transformation of our present economic condition, similar to the change which took place in the political institutions of Europe in the transition from the modes of government prevalent under the Roman Empire to those under the Christian-Germanic constitution. He deprecates any design of interfering with property in the existing process of industry by means of money-wages. At the same time he wished to bring about a more satisfactory relationship between labour and capital,

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to raise the character and conditions of the workers of society, and to diminish the gulf between employer and employed by legal and peaceable means. He shows that what is called the free contract between employer and employed differs little from slavery, as far as the labourers are concerned, since the scourge of prospective hunger is as much an incentive to labour among ourselves as the whip of the slave-driver elsewhere. He directs attention to the evils of unequal distribution of property in rendering the poor permanently helpless in the endeavour to compete with the rich for a proper share in the distribution of wealth. He shows how, according to existing relations between them, there is a constant and enormous increase of wealth among a small number of enterprising capitalists and landed proprietors, whereas the condition of the masses remains comparatively unimproved.

The various socialistic schemes to remedy this state of things are, in his opinion, so many empirical attempts to reconcile the irreconcilable, or half-measures to cure social evils which ought rather to be prevented by legislation. He sees in the gradual introduction of rational laws to restrict the undue growth of capital in a few hands, and to impede the further progress of abject pauperism among the masses, the only means for counteracting that cruel

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law of nature according to which the strongest alone survive in the struggle for existence, whereas the rest perish, or are condemned to life-long misery and despair. For by the admission of the whole orthodox school of economy the average rate of wages, owing to this competition struggle and constant increase of the labouring classes in the case of any considerable rise in the price of labour, rarely rises above the minimum required for maintaining life and securing the necessary services of the labourer. In the same way, he remarks, beasts of burden receive a certain indispensable quantity of fodder, and machines receive fuel and attention to keep them in proper working order. Now this state of things, he maintains, can only be remedied if the State will undertake the regulation of prices and the fixing of a normal day of labour, and by fair legislation, generally, bring about a more equalised diffusion of property among all classes of society.

In this way, he hopes, the future social constitution of peoples will be as superior to the present as ours is compared with the slave-systems of antiquity. It would be out of place here to enter at large into the thirty-four abstruse reasons given by Rodbertus in support of these suggestions, or to define more scientifically his method of social reform to prevent a social revolution. What we have stated in general

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terms will explain how far Lassalle, the practical founder of Modern Socialism, and even K. Marx, the theoretical guide of abstract Radicalism, are indebted to this comparatively unknown but most original exponent of Scientific Socialism. Moreover, it was important to show the transition from Proudhon's Critical and Negative Socialism to that of the critical but positive school of Modern Socialism in Germany Proudhon, as we have shown in the last paper, is the analytically destructive critic of pre-scientific Utopias. Rodbertus, on the other hand, may be called the synthetically constructive propounder of modern scientific schemes of social improvement, the one standing with his face turned back despairingly on the past, the other with his keen glance looking forward hopefully to the future, represent the Utopias of the past and the present respectively, the one closing the old, the other opening the new era of socialistic speculation.

Lassalle is intimately connected with Rodbertus. A portion of their correspondence has been published, and from it we learn how anxious Lassalle was to obtain the support of an economist so respected, and with whom he sympathised so strongly in theory, though Rodbertus was diametrically opposed to Lassalle's impetuous modes of carrying this theory into practice.

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Both believed in the doctrine of social evolution, both aimed at the same thing in social politics, both deplored the same social abuses; but whereas Rodbertus was for waiting on events, and making use of constitutional means to influence the legislature, Lassalle, more eager to obtain immediate results, was in favour of active agitation. Though a believer in the historical development of social and political institutions, Lassalle, as a good Hegelian, also believed in the dialectical processes, the conflicts between "arrested and progressive development," as necessary to bring about such changes, nor does he share Rodbertus's dread of revolutions. In fact, he regards revolution in quite a different light. He maintains that any great changes, with or without violence, deserve the name of revolution. Thus he considers the rise of modern industry consequent upon the discovery of machinery for the manufacture of Cotton in 1775 as a "gigantic revolution." On the other hand, he does not regard the rising of the German peasants during the reformatory period as a revolutionary movement in this sense, simply because it remained without effect in improving the condition of the malcontents. In fact, he measures revolutions by the results they produce, and using the word "revolution" in this sense, he calls himself a "revolutionist by nature." As such he does not

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hesitate for a moment either to call in the aid of the State to bring about a "thorough reformation" by main force, or to head the democracy as a means to set the slow State machine a-going in this direction.

He appeals to, and expects great results from, popular support. Already he hears at a distance the subdued tread of marching labour-battalions, who are to save the national honour, and utters the battle-cry, "Save! save! save yourself from bondage of the present modes of production which unhumanised you, converting you into mere purchasable commodities!" Universal suffrage is to be the great means for effecting this purpose; the political power of the labourers is to emancipate them from social bondage. "Already," he exclaims, "the lightning trembles in the sky—it is the advent of direct universal suffrage! One way or another it will descend with a sudden flash! Arm yourself with this lightning power! Save yourselves and save Germany." Thus Lassalle becomes the founder of Modern German Socialism as an important factor in German politics, "its father and hero, the impersonation of all its characteristics."

Now to understand thoroughly Lassalle's plan for socialistic reconstruction, it is important to have a right insight into the character of this remarkable man, whom the poet Heine calls his "dearest and most valued friend," his "brother-in-arms," whom

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Alexander von Humboldt calls a "marvellous child," who made at one time a most brilliant figure in the best society in Berlin, and yet was the idol of the working-classes, among whom, since his death, he has become the object of almost religious veneration. He was a man of rare qualities, combining in his person the most opposite characteristics. He was, at the same time, a profound scholar and a persuasive popular orator; gifted with delicate and incisive logical discernment, he was, nevertheless, successful as a teacher of the common people; a refined man of culture, he yet maintained creditably the position as the chosen spokesman of Democracy; a wealthy man of the world and a lover of pleasure and luxurious ease, fond of the elegancies of life and the resources of a fashionable gentleman,*

* "His rooms were hung with costly tapestry; there were divans covered with the richest silk, on which he and his friends sat and smoked *haschisch*; his reception-room was ornamented with heavy velvet curtains, luxurious furniture, and a multitude of mirrors, bronzes, and large Japanese and Chinese vases." Professor Brandes remarks: "He was an Alcibiades, both in love of enjoyment and capacity, able to adapt himself to all surroundings, perfectly at home with men of science and men of the Revolution, in prison and the ball-room, who 'in his youth entered the dungeon as indifferently as others go to a ball;' he was a Roman in force of will, power of activity, political penetration and talent, born to conquer and to organise."

Some of his opponents see in this love of ease and enjoyment a sign of Lassalle's inconsistency. He was, however, quite consistent in all this; for what he demanded was a wide, limitless self-indulgence in the

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yet indefatigable in laborious research, subjecting himself to constant, self-denying work for the promotion of the cause he had taken in hand; a "tribune of the people in aristocratic garb," ready to die a martyr's death for the people's cause; regardless of all moral and religious conventionalities, yet religiously, and with all the moral force of a strong nature, pursuing his self-imposed mission of social regeneration—he comes before us as a man of great faults and great virtues, but a whole man, thorough in all he did, vigorous in framing resolutions, competent in action, courageous and persevering to the end—an agitator of no mean order.

The son of wealthy Jewish parents, gifted with a considerable private fortune, he cannot be accused of the lower motives of self-advancement in becoming a popular agitator, and in opposing and ridiculing throughout his writings that aristocratic section of the *bourgeoisie* to which he belonged.

He came for the first time prominently before the public at the age of twenty-three. Shortly after

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direction of refined enjoyment for *all*. Having a large fortune of his own, he was bent on having his will in such things. He is never weary in denouncing the readiness to endure privation on the part of the working-classes as the chief obstacle to their improvement and general progress.

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leaving college he began to take a prominent share in the German Democratic movement of 1848. He joined the Socialist party in the Rhineland, who shared the hopes and aspirations of the French socialists of the same period, described in a previous chapter. Lassalle was arrested on the charge of having "excited the citizens to arm themselves against the royal power, and sought to provoke civil war," and, after six months' imprisonment, was brought to trial in 1849. His own defence on that trial was a masterpiece of forensic skill, it raised his fame for the first time in Germany, and endeared him in the hearts of working-classes about the Rhine. He was condemned to prison, and protested against attempts made by his sister and Alexander von Humboldt to obtain a royal pardon. During this short revolutionary episode he had appealed in vain to the old democratic spirit of the *bourgeoisie*, and had failed in bringing about a union between them and the working-men. This was the beginning of the breach between him and the party of progress, which reached its culmination when, fourteen years later, the irresolute conduct and dilatory measures of that party, in their struggle with a reactionary Government, convinced Lassalle that he could not use them for his purpose. Henceforth he turned his face against them, and cast in his lot with the working-classes—the fourth estate, as he called them,

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whose destiny, he said, it was to exercise the greatest influence in the State after the Revolution of 1848, as the third estate had done after the Revolution of 1789. The main differences between the third and fourth estate he described in something like the following terms:

The moral idea of the *bourgeoisie* (*i.e.* the third estate), is that of simply guaranteeing to each the unhindered activity of his forces; it would limit the ends of government to the protection of personal property. But this is a mere "*night-watchman's idea*," from which it would follow that, if there were no more robbers and thieves, the State itself would be superfluous. In the fourth estate the object of government is, by solidarity of interests, to unfold and progressively develop man's being into the full possession of freedom. A State which should embrace this principle could produce an upsoaring of the intellect, a sum of happiness, cultivation, well-being, freedom, beside which the most celebrated periods of earlier times should be but as a fading shadow-picture.*

This was said in 1862, in a lecture delivered before the Artisans' Society of the Oranienburg suburb of Berlin, "On the Special Connection of the Present Historical Period with the Idea of the Working Classes as a Fourth Estate," and may be regarded as the first manifesto of Lassalle in putting himself at the head of the labour-battalions. But during the period of his imprisonment in 1848, up to this date, Lassalle had been living in comparative retirement, or engaged in matters of litigation affecting the

* See an article on Lassalle, by J. M. Ludlow, in "The Fortnightly Review," No. XXVIII. (New Series).

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Countess of Hatzfeld, with which we are not here concerned. About the same time he was occupied with two important philosophical works which, while they placed him in the first rank of authors, opened to him, also, the world of learning and of fashion in Berlin.*

These works show by their depth and width of learning that Lassalle was not merely an agitator, but also an accurate thinker and a painstaking student, and that but for his impatient temperament he might have lived a life of learned ease, and gained for himself influence and renown by his writings, without incurring the many dangers, sorrows, and disappointments which follow in the wake of active agitation.

* The first of these, on the "Philosophy of Heracleitus the Dark," begun in 1846, and finished in 1855, though written with no intention of making socialistic propaganda, contains some ideas on the conjuncture of events interfering with individual responsibility, and making human beings the victims of circumstance, which afterwards are used by Lassalle as an argument in favour of State help and the protection of the individual by society in his programme of socialistic agitation.

The second book, which ranks among the best and most original works on legal science, "The System of Acquired Rights—a Reconciliation of Positive Law with the Philosophy of Law," which appeared in 1861, is also free from any intentional allusions to socialistic doctrines —which shows remarkable self-restraint and scientific self-discipline in so sanguine a social reformer as Lassalle—contains, nevertheless, ideas on the rights of property and bequest which are of a very revolutionary character. For therein Lassalle maintains, and shows the reasonableness of, the assertion that society can at any given moment change or reverse the intention of bequests, in order to bring about a totally different and more equitable distribution of property.

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He determined, however, to become a "social Luther," a "bringer of light, daring and reckless like Lucifer himself, a torch-bearer;" not unwilling thus to throw a favourable light upon his own personal performances, nor unprepared, if need be, to produce by his torch of truth a mighty conflagration. With a keen perception of the spiritual conflict, and in full sympathy with the social and intellectual movement of the Reformation, he enters upon his agitatorial career with those words adapted from Luther: "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise; God help me; Amen! Even if it lead to my moral death—aye, even if I be literally torn to pieces—I cannot act otherwise. An agitation of labourers exists; they must have theoretical knowledge, they must have a watchword given them. They shall have it, even if it cost the head." In publishing his first agitatorial manifesto he compares it with the affixing of Luther's theses at the church of Wittenberg. So, too, in the only poetical work he wrote, the drama of "Franz von Sickingen," he describes not only the struggles of the Reformation, but makes it, also, the exponent of his own reformatory ideals, as well as the index of his plans and purposes as a social reformer. But Lassalle was not only a reformer, but also a revolutionist, "a breaker-down of walls." He felt within himself the "glowing soul" that was full of unsparing passion, ready to

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boil over in unrestrained violence. Thus he says of himself, in a series of interesting letters to a young Russian lady to whom he was warmly attached, and which contains, so to speak, the confessions of Ferdinand Lassalle, "I have been a revolutionary spirit out of the school of Robespierre." He might have added, if he had been a reader of the "Epic of Hades," that he was full

> Of grief and anger, grown to fierce revolt,
> And hatred of the invisible force which holds
> The issue of men's lives, and binds us fast
> Within the net of fate.

In Lassalle, then, we must be prepared to find some of the virtues of great reformers as well as some of the vices of great revolutionists. Remembering this, we may now turn from a consideration of his character to his teaching. This may be gathered, first, from his critical view of past and present society, showing the historical deterioration of the workingman's condition up to the present day, and the positive projects put forward by Lassalle to remove their grievances; and, secondly, from his controversial writings and speeches generally as affecting the received theories of the political economists of the orthodox or so-called Manchester school, and having for their object to prove the impotence of self-help, or co-operation aided by private benevolence,

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whilst defending his own counter-proposal of State-help in aid of voluntary productive associations of the labouring people. We shall confine ourselves here to the first, and reserve an exposition of the second for the next chapter.

According to Lassalle's view of the historical development of society, the labouring classes among the nations of antiquity, and during mediæval times, were in a far better position than those of our own day, who are free in name, but actually bound, hand and foot, to the employer who has the capital and instruments of production in his own power, without being necessarily concerned about the welfare of the hands he employs. The ancient helots and slaves were attached to the family of the owner, or treated at least as human beings and not as parts of a material machinery—as impersonal units in the division of labour. The condition of the Roman proletarian was by no means so hopelessly wretched as that of the modern wages-labourer, although it grew worse with the gradual advance of the "destructive invasion" of capital. During the Middle Ages, if serfdom and unfreedom prevailed, there still existed a human relationship between the lord of the soil and his subordinates. Services were exacted harshly and unjustly at times, but there was at least security of the needful supplies for the maintenance of life and a

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certain constancy and stability in human affairs and relations. There was poverty, but none of the present uncertainty of daily bread. In short, the solidarity of interest in the ancient and mediæval communities preserved the workers from the effects of contingencies, crises, and commercial emergencies which result from our modern industrial system. The French Revolution, in dissolving this solidarity of interests, and in emancipating man from all feudal bondage, removed also the former responsibilities of employers towards the employed. In establishing individual liberty, it put an end to the binding relationship between man and man, and threw the labourer, "skin and bones, upon the market." It established the principle of free contract and free competition, and where these prevail the happiness or misery of the individual workmen depends on the successful speculation of the capitalists; all depends on the state of the world's market. That unsettles the position of those who are in the place of wages-labourers, who have to produce marketable commodities. Some of the capitalists it enables to make large fortunes, others it condemns to incalculable losses, which expose again the labourer to probable poverty and possible distress. For example, if nowadays the crops of raisins in Corinth or Smyrna, or the wheat harvest in the Mississippi Valley or the Danubian Principalities,

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turn out well, the dealers in raisins residing at the great towns of Europe, as well as the corndealers who have bought and stored up large quantities of grain at former prices, will lose half the property by the fall occasioned by these favourable harvests. If on the contrary the harvest should turn out badly, the labourers during that year lose half or more of their wages, not by receiving less in money, but in being able to buy only half the amount of victuals which was bought formerly for the same price. Again, should it so happen that the cotton supplies from the Southern States of America were stopped suddenly from dearth or any other cause, then the labourers in England, France, and Germany, engaged in manufactures which depend on this supply, are left without occupation, and consequently without bread.

But suppose, instead of a cotton famine in America there is a crisis affecting either the money market or industrial produce—say a glut in the market of foreign goods, which have been sent there by various merchants from different quarters, all arriving at the same time in enormous quantities. The natural consequence of this will be a general sale by auction of these goods, perhaps under the cost price, and by this the European manufactures of silk and velvet are stopped for a time owing to the want of new orders. Newly discovered gold or silver mines in distant parts of the

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world, with the prospect of abundant yield, change the nature of contracts by a consequent depreciation of the precious metals. They enrich the debtors and impoverish the creditors all over Europe; whilst a heightened and constant demand for silver in China and Japan will have the opposite effect. Every new mechanical invention which cheapens the production of any commodity depreciates the value of a mass of commodities of the same kind which has been previously stored up, and does more or less injury to those engaged hitherto in such production. Not even a new line of railway can be laid down anywhere without increasing the value of land, houses, and commerce in its immediate neighbourhood, and depreciating to the same extent land, houses, and commerce situated in an opposite direction, which has not the advantages of proximity to a railway line.

These and similar examples are adduced to prove how a conjuncture of circumstances and a combination of events operating in the world of commerce bring about economic results with which individual acts have little or nothing to do, but are rather governed and determined by them. "You may overlook this fact," says Lassalle, "but you cannot remove it. There it is avenging itself on those who will not apprehend it as a power of nature, a *fate*, playing at balls with the supposed liberty of individuals.

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Some are hoisted up into the lap of fortune, others are hurled down into the abyss of poverty. Human beings are the balls in the hands of accident; but where accident prevails, individual liberty is crushed and responsibility and accountability do no longer exist. Yes," he says, "social relations, with their connecting links and interdependent conditions, are the orphic chain of which the ancient poets sang, as indissolubly binding and connecting everything. And strangely enough, and not without a deep significance and a certain humour, this old orphic chain has still its old names among our modern mercantile men. This chain of social intercommunication, this chain which links together all known and all unknown circumstances, is called in our modern commercial world *conjuncture*, and the supernatural, metaphysical endeavours to solve the riddle as to the results of these unknowable circumstances are known under the name of *speculation*."

And in all this the labourer is the main sufferer, since the capitalist has at least something to fall back upon; but the labourer has neither capital to consume, nor credit to borrow; his back is "the green gambling-table on which speculators and enterprising capitalists play their hazard game at production in the ordinary commercial transactions of the day. The back of the labourer is the green table on which

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they cash their heaps of gold if the roulette gives them a fortunate turn, and on which they throw away their last chance in case of reverses, hoping to make up their losses on the next best occasion."

This he calls the irreversible *fate* which overlooms our present industrial world, and makes the labourers victims of circumstances over which they have no control. Hence the responsibility of society, as represented by the State, to come to the rescue of those of its members who are thus left to the mercy of pure chance, and whom it would be cruel to invite to help themselves. Hence the call for State aid in forming associations of labour which shall spread their ramifications throughout all industries, and by a system of statistical observation of the rise and fall in prices, and reviewing fluctuations of supply and demand, to guard against the evils of over-production and the baneful results of wild speculation ending in commercial crises and spreading ruin and distress among the people. The associations thus to be formed "should begin in those branches of industry which are best fitted for the purpose, through the greater number of workmen employed, and in those districts and localities which, through the nature of their industrious activity, the thickness of their population, and its predisposition towards association, seem also the most suitable. As soon as a sufficient

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number of such associations are in existence, they will make it easier to associate all other branches of industry and localities, since all State-helped associations would naturally enter into a mutual credit union, as well as into an insurance union, against occasional losses. The State would be in no wise the dictator, but could only have the establishment and approval of the rules, and a sufficient control of the business to secure its interests. Every week the customary wages of the trade and locality would be paid to the workers, and at the end of the year the profits shared amongst them."

This reorganisation of society he deems to be necessary because our present modes of conducting and distributing wealth amount to no less than social anarchy. Under a semblance of free individual production a distribution of property prevails which is determined entirely by external and unsettled relations of society, the leadership of capital, the competition, struggle, and the conjunction of incalculable events. "At this moment," he says, "there reigns an anarchical Socialism" in which all the benefits accrue to a few who possess property, and all the evil results fall upon the many who have none. This state of things can only be mended by reuniting the scattered units of labourers, helpless in their disunion, and forming them into concrete bodies.

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Thus we may save society from ruin and procure the happiness of all the individual members of which it is composed.

This, then, is the conclusion of Lassalle's historical view of society: "The whole world of antiquity and the Middle Ages sought human solidarity or communion of interests in serfdom and subjection. The French Revolution of 1789, and the historical period governed by its principles, sought liberty in loosening all solidarity and community of interests, although liberty without the latter becomes licence. The aim of modern days, which dates from 1848, seeks solidarity in freedom."*

Hence the necessity of free combination by organising the labourers and establishing solidarity by means of rallying round a common standard; hence the necessity of drawing up the rank and file of the fourth estate. As the third estate delivered society from feudal bondage, so it is the mission of the fourth estate to rescue it from the thraldom of capital and the enslaving power of irresponsible speculation.

* It is remarkable that, in a speech delivered in May last, M. Emile de Laveleye spoke in almost identical terms of social development in connection with the rise of the democracy and modern social politics.

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CHAPTER XII.

LASSALLE AND THE GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

IN confronting, as we saw in the last chapter, the propertied and non-propertied classes, Lassalle declared war, so to speak, between the third and fourth estates, and thus placed himself at the head of the social democracy, arrayed against the existing order of society. Now began the era of controversy and agitation, during which he sets himself to defend his social theories, to justify his position, and to fortify his vantage-ground as the leader of the working-classes.

The immediate and external cause of this was the split which occurred in the industrial union of labourers at Leipzig, into two factions, those who sympathised with, and those who were opposed to, the scheme of co-operative reform advocated by Schulze Delitzsch. A central committee was appointed to convoke a general congress of German

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labourers at Leipzig, and to address Lassalle with a view to obtain his opinion as to the best means of improving the condition of the labourers, and as to the general value of co-operation and association. In answer to this, Lassalle still adopts a respectful tone towards Schulze Delitzsch, "who," he says, "by his indefatigable activity, though standing alone in a season of the greatest commercial depression, nevertheless became the father of German co-operation, and so has given an impulse to the cause of association, most important in its remoter consequences, a merit which," he adds, "I for my part, though his opponent, cannot help acknowledging, and in doing so hold out the right hand of fellowship to him." At the same time he endeavours to point out the superiority of State-help in the formation of co-operative societies, and expresses his full approval of the scheme for forming "a general association of labourers," a sort of "labour league," for the whole of Germany on these principles. The league was accordingly founded, and Lassalle became its first president, with almost dictatorial powers. In this way the representatives of State-help and self-help were brought face to face. Lassalle, at the head of the labour-league, and Schulze Delitzsch, the "king of the Social world," as his adherents called him, were brought in direct collision with each other.

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Now the latter was a man justly esteemed for his high public spirit, his disinterested munificence, and indefatigable labours on behalf of the lower middle-class and the artisans generally, who have been vastly benefited since by the establishment of credit-banks, co-operative stores, and associations, for the purchase of raw material, which had been called into existence by him. Unfortunately he was induced by the party of liberal economists, whom he represented, to write a pamphlet under the title, "A Chapter from a German Working Man's Catechism," in which he attacks the main positions of Lassalle, and rather speaks slightingly of the attainments of the latter, although both in economic knowledge and literary ability he was the inferior of his opponent by a long way. Lassalle confronts his adversary with the conscious pride of intellectual superiority: "I write every line I write, armed with the whole culture of my century."

The work which contains his reply is still regarded as the "socialistic canon" of the author, and has become the catechism of the German Socialists as the work of Karl Marx on "Capital" has become their Bible. It is remarkable for the vigour of argumentative statement, trenchant sarcasm, and the prodigious amount of learning compressed into the least possible space, to render it popular for agitatorial purposes. The book, it must be added, is remarkable also for

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the expression of very unpleasant and unbecoming personalities which disfigure its pages.*

The question at issue between the two men was simply this, Can the labourer raise himself by his own unaided power under present circumstances or not? Schulze Delitzsch, as the spokesman of the whole free-trade party—*i.e.* the whole *bourgeoisie* of Germany—replies in the affirmative. Lassalle, to prove the fallacy of this position, develops the theory of what he terms the "brazen law" of wages, resting for his authority on Ricardo and the other representatives of orthodox economy. From it he endeavours to show that the rate of wages can never rise much above the minimum amount required for daily support according to the lowest standard of life.

The brazen economic law, which, in the present state of things, determines the rate of wages in obedience to the laws of demand and supply, is this: that the average rate of wages continues to be reduced to the least amount necessary for main-

* Its title is "Herr Bastiat-Schulze von Delitzsch, der Ökonomische Julian, oder Capital und Arbeit." Bastiat, whom Schulze frequently quotes and misquotes, is the well-known economist of the *laissez-faire* school. The allusion to "*Julian*" refers to another polemical production of a purely literary character written against Julian Schmidt, the author of a "History of German Literature."

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taining life according to the customary requirements of existence, and to secure the perpetuation of the people. This is the point round which the real rate of wages gravitates amid all the vibrations of the pendulum on either side of it. It cannot rise above it permanently, for in this case the easier existence of the labourers, occasioned by improved circumstances, would only promote more frequent marriages among, and hence a further increase of, the population, and with it an addition to the number of hands demanding work, and so bringing down wages to their former lower condition. Nor can the rate of wages fall permanently far below the necessary requirements of existence, for in that case emigration, enforced celibacy, depopulation, and other causes of decrease in the ranks of the labourers, arising from the reduced condition, would diminish the number of hands, and so raise wages to their former standard.

This is the inexorable law of nature of the political economists which prevents the labourer from ever raising himself from his present sunken position, and condemns him to eternal dependence on his employer or public benevolence. The proposals of Schulze Delitzsch only touch the well-being of small tradesmen in their unequal struggle with large capital, a struggle which must end in defeat, and can only be aggravated and prolonged by such efforts of partial

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co-operation, aided by private charity, without affecting in the least the future of the labouring classes. The fate of the latter remains the same whilst the brazen law of wages prevails, and capital, like a sponge, absorbs all the surplus produce remaining over and above that which is necessary for the maintenance of a labouring class. Nothing can rescue them from their degrading condition but putting them into a position of meeting capital on equal terms, and removing the landmarks which now separate employer and employed. In order to do this there must be State-intervention in their favour, and to secure this the labourers must first become a strong political power in the State, since the ruling classes, if left to themselves, will not feel inclined to legislate contrary to their own interests or in favour of removing any rights and privileges peculiar to their order. Hence, again, the necessity of universal suffrage.

Schulze Delitzsch had laid much stress on the necessity of a more extensive productivity as the only means of increasing the available commodities of life, and so promoting a wider diffusion of necessaries and comforts among the less-favoured sections of society. He held up co-operation as a means to that end, and laid down self-help in contradiction to State-help as his leading principle. Lassalle shows,

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on the contrary, that heightened production only enriches the employer, according to the brazen law of wages, without improving the condition of the labourers, that the assistance granted by Schulze Delitzsch and others for the purposes of co-operation prove the inability of the labourer to help himself, and that State-credit and the support of co-operative societies by the State are the only available remedy, because of the ample resources at the disposal of a Government, and the possibility of thus making co-operation universal. He shows that to require labourers, in their present isolated position, without means, influence, or credit, to help themselves, is the same as to call out to a person laden with ten hundredweight, who has fallen into the water, to swim; he points out that State-intervention by no means implied the utter absence of self-help, just as it is not preventing a man to ascend a tower himself by giving him a ladder or rope to aid him in his undertaking, and just as it is not interfering with the process of self-education by providing Government grants to schools and establishing public libraries and other means of culture by order of the State. He again refers to the frequent appeals to State-help made by his opponents when the interests of the community were at stake, as in the case of emigration-aids or such votes as that of twenty millions in England

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for the abolition of slavery. Again, without State-intervention, canals, streets, railways, telegraphs, postal arrangements, and other public works and institutions, would not have been called into existence nor brought to their present perfection.

As a matter of fact, he argues, the majority of the population are without means; the State represents the totality of the individuals composing it. "Why, then," he demands of the labourers, "should not your great association, the State, exercise its influence in furthering and fructifying your small associations?"

It was objected by his opponents that this was only reintroducing Louis Blanc's scheme; but Lassalle demurs against this aspersion, and shows the invalidity of the arguments against him drawn from the failures of the Paris workshops. Again it was objected that co-operation, under State-patronage, such as Lassalle demanded, implied great risk. He says, No! risk only is possible when there is competition between the great capitalists. The State has no inducement to enter upon a course of risky speculation, it has every opportunity of guarding itself against the dangers of over-production, and is less dependent on the fluctuation of the world's commerce and the vicissitudes of trade. Left to himself, the labourer must succumb in the present struggle; aided by the State, he can meet his

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adversaries on an equal footing. The imitation of co-operative action, therefore, must come from the State. "As the great battalions in war, so also the huge masses of labourers on the one hand and the great capitalists on the other must decide the victory on the economic field of battle. Nothing is easier than transforming free competition, which at present crushes the labourer into an instrument for his liberation. But in order to do this we must have large battalions—*i.e.* complete organisation—of labourers. This the State can effect as it places armies on the battle-field; so, also, in economic warfare it must do so by means of State-credit, to set in motion the labour-battalions and secure for them the victory."

But Lassalle was not satisfied in merely defending his own position. He was determined to carry the war into the enemy's camp, and to lay bare with unsparing criticism the false assumptions and untenable positions of the apologists for the present social system. Thus, *e.g.* some of the old economists had laid down in their text-books (and the assertion contained a serious error which Schulze Delitzsch ought not to have endorsed) that labour is the sole source of all valuable productions. Lassalle fixes on this admission, that all labour *quanta* taken together comprise the wealth of nations, but at the same time

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he shows that the remuneration of labour forms the least portion of it, and that all the rest flows into the employers' pocket. From this he deduces the theory that capital is nothing else but congealed labour, the work of labourers of past generations appropriated by the employers, and from this he draws a conclusion similar to that of Proudhon as to the nature of property. He does not assert, indeed, that property is theft, but he maintains that property is the acquired or appropriated possession of others, and will ever remain so as long as the employed is left to the mercy of the employer.

Thus, again, in answer to the assertion of economists that the economic process of the present day is nothing else but simple barter and exchange of services and commodities between man and man, Lassalle endeavours to show the fallacy of this by pointing out that all work is done to produce marketable commodities, to create manufactures for sale, and this entirely under the leadership of capital. The labourer, so far from being a free agent, who on equal terms exchanges his produce for other means of consumption, has simply assigned to him a place in the vast machinery as an instrument of production, who is bound to work for so much a day, like a slave without a slave's advantages. Thus he loses his liberty of action and independence of cha-

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racter without enjoying the privileges of the helots of antiquity. Capital, once the instrument of labour, becomes now his master, and makes him the subservient instrument of production under its iron rule. The responsible being, man, becomes the slave of impersonal money. The productive power of creating wealth now resides in the latter; the former is condemned to involuntary drudgery at the bidding of the unconscious tyrant.

It would be tedious to follow Lassalle through the whole labyrinth of such and similar controversies with his opponents, although it is not a little amusing at times to notice the quickness of his movements, the direct pointedness of his sarcasm, and the remarkable felicity of his humorous illustrations in this dialectical warfare. We must conclude this part of the subject with one of the latter, where he ridicules the truly "Pecksniffian laudations" of abstinence bestowed by some political economists on those who accumulate large capitals. This he ascribes to the anxiety of the ordinary *bourgeois* Philistine to throw a halo of moral sanction on the worship of Mammon, and to reconcile the non-saving wages-labourers with their wretched condition. To all such, who in their firm belief in the "sacredness of the money bag" call capital, with the consciousness of moral dignity, the "reward of abstinence," Lassalle replies with all

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the fervour of his ferocious humour. "So, then, capital is the reward of abstinence! Happy, invaluable word! European millionaires are ascetics, Indian penitents, Stylites, standing with one leg on the column with haggard countenance and outstretched arm, holding out the plate to receive from the populace the reward of their self-abnegation. In the midst of them all, and far surpassing the rest of these sufferers, stands their chief, the house of Rothschild."

The actual period of Lassalle's agitation comprises only two years, 1862–64; but friend and foe alike confess that during this short interval he did the work of ten years. He issued about twenty publications, some of which equal in contents and importance works of large dimension. He conducted at the same time a vast correspondence as the organising president of the newly-founded Association of Labourers; he was complicated in a number of lawsuits, always pleading his own cause; he visited the most important centres of commerce to address large meetings of working-men, often having to fight his way against opposition and organised obstruction; but he persevered to the end, regarding a great class conflict unavoidable in the presence of the reactionary spirit prevailing at the time among those in power and the middle classes; he saw no other remedy but

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to make an appeal to the masses of the people. "Give me," he says, "five hundred thousand German labourers who will join my association, and our reaction is no more!"

But he trusted not only to brute force, he aimed much higher, and attempted to educate those whom he led by teaching them their true position and duties in society, and bringing the labourer within reach of science. In his defence before the Berlin tribunal, where he had been summoned to answer against certain charges in connection with the publication of the "Working Man's Programme," he pleads thus:

"The alliance of science and the labourers, these two opposite poles of society, when once they shall have met and embraced each other, will crush all the impediments of culture in their brazen arms. This is the object for which I am determined to spend my life as long as there is any breath in me."

And again, in addressing the labourers, he says:

"The great honour of this historical vocation—the future mission of the working-classes—must absorb all the thoughts of the labourer. The crimes of an oppressed order of society, the indolent amusements of the thoughtless, even the harmless light-heartedness of ordinary mortals, do not become you

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any longer. You are the rock on which the Church of the present is to be built."

We have now given a sketch of the character, opinions, and aims of this remarkable man. It only remains to note the results of his agitation, and so to form a proximate estimate as to what will be the verdict of history at some future date, when passions have subsided, on his life and labours.

Lassalle was determined to make his labourers the "sounding-board" for the utterance of his ideas. As may be imagined, he found as much resistance as resonance in the dull, heavy masses whose elevation he attempted. At first he met with much lethargy and indifference. Towards the close of his career the difficulty of pacifying malcontents in his own ranks, of reconciling their opposing interests, and composing their mutual jealousies, often made his heart faint and his hopes fail. When, three months after the establishment of the Labourers' Association, only one thousand had been enrolled, and the hundred thousands of which Lassalle had dreamed were exceedingly slow in coming forward, he began for a moment to assume a desponding tone. "These are," he writes to one of his friends, "for the present the fruits of our labours! Is not this apathy of the masses enough to make one despair, my dear Valteich —such indifference towards a movement which is set

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in motion purely in their own interest, and with a lavish expenditure of intellectual means of agitation? Amongst people like the French, these would already have produced immense results. When will this dull nation shake off at last their lethargy?" Valteich recommends immediate dissolution of the association. "Impossible!" replies Lassalle; "this would be a shame for our nation and party. Only courage!"

In the midst of interminable legal persecutions, in the face of innumerable disappointments, his belief in his own mission never forsook him; he is ready to suffer and die in the cause. "I am born, as Heine said of me when nineteen years old, to die like a gladiator with a smile on my lips," he says; "it is unimportant whether I have to suffer more or less in life. Let others be happy! In natures like mine it is enough to go on struggling, to lose, one by one, every drop of blood, to waste away one's own heart, and yet to appear smiling while death is gnawing away at one's inmost soul."

But if there were these discouragements, there was also cause for triumph towards the latter portion of his career. Personal devotion, unbounded admiration, and unconditional obedience were accorded to him by the more intelligent labourers in the Rhineland, especially where he had been long known and best understood. There he determined, in 1863, to

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hold a general review of his troops. He held mass meetings, addressing three thousand in one place, five thousand in another. When the meeting was broken up on some pretext by the police, and Lassalle resorted to the telegraph-station to claim protection from Berlin, ten thousand labourers accompanied him, amid thundering hurrahs. In the spring of 1864, in revisiting the same place to hold in person, for the first and last time, the anniversary of the foundation of the Labourers' Association, hundreds of labourers received him at the stations, processions accompanied him to his residence, which was adorned with wreaths and bouquets of flowers, and presents were heaped upon him from all quarters. In every town, and all along his process from place to place, he was greeted with serenadings, triumphal arches, inscriptions, wreaths, and there were acclamations and popular rejoicings without end. Old and young labourers crowded around him to obtain a shake of his hand or a glance from his eye. Sometimes twenty-five decorated carriages followed him as a guard of honour. Lassalle, elated by these successes, looking back on the small beginnings of his agitation, and comparing them with the present promising aspect of affairs, brings his eloquent speech on this occasion to a close in these words: "We have at last compelled the labourers, the people generally, the learned—even

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the bishops and the king—to recognise the truth of our principles."

Still, even in this moment of triumph, Lassalle felt the insecurity of his position, and saw dangers ahead in the apathy of the masses and in the ill-will, envy, and coarse violence of his opponents. These he all foresaw, and with a deep consciousness of the gravity of his position, the strength of the opposing forces arrayed against him, and his own heavy responsibility in consequence thereof, he expresses a presentiment that he himself must fall a victim to the cause, and hopes some one may arise to take it up in his place.

Soon after this he actually died, not a martyr's death, but in a duel entirely of a private nature. Nevertheless, his followers regarded it in a different light and looked upon it as the fulfilment of this prophecy. Thus ended prematurely the career of one whom Heine had called the "Messiah of the nineteenth century," and whose memory is still held sacred among the working-classes of the present day, although under successive leaders they have far departed from the principles of their first master.

Those who felt most the lash of Lassalle's unsparing criticism, as well as some of those who sympathise with him in the general tendencies of the movement, but are misled by the misrepresenting of some of his false friends who maligned him after his

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death, sneer at this "Lassallian worship of a godless Messiah" without discovering, much less explaining, its real cause. To account for it we must recollect that a movement such as that of the social democracy in Germany cannot be set in motion without the existence of much latent discontent among the people. No agitation, such as that of Lassalle, in the face of many obstacles, is possible without strong popular passion to support it. The ideas propounded by Lassalle, indeed, fell flat at first on many of his unprepared hearers, but immediately after his death the dormant passions of the multitude are let loose, the slow moving masses are roused from a long stupor, and the dim consciousness of a better hope assumes form and shape, so that with one accord they now declare that the great Socialist prophet has given utterance to their long-felt grievances and long-repressed aspirations. In a healthy condition of society the people form one conservative mass, justly remarks a recent German writer* of moderate views on this subject, and he looks upon the growth of the social democracy as a sign of the contrary, and adds that Lassalle's successes in organising class against class, and employer against employed, could never have been as successful if the foundation of this

* H. von Scheel in a very valuable contribution on the subject, "Unsere Socialpolitischen Parteien," Leipzig, 1878. F. A. Brockhaus.

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success had not been laid in the social condition of the times.

A long era of legislative restrictions, the evil results of what Mr. Laing, in his "Observations on the Social and Political State of the European People in 1848 and 1849," calls excessive *functionarism*, the paternal rule of the State preventing the development of self-government, irritating by its constant interference with individual liberty, and misleading the people in times of distress to look to the all-powerful State for a remedy—these were some of the proximate causes of discontent of the people which induced them to lend a willing ear to Socialist agitators in presence of many evils resulting from our modern industrial system, and still more aggravated by a crushing military system. Hence, when the French Revolution of 1848 sent a thrill of popular commotion through Europe, Germany felt the shock more than any other country. The revolutionary spirit then aroused was repressed, but not subdued, by the reactionary tactics of Governments; it has received fresh aliment from the later constitutional struggles in Prussia, and has been, moreover, stimulated by the national aspirations which followed the signal successes at Sadowa and Sedan. Social disharmonies and social distress, which have been the occasion of so many Utopian schemes else-

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where, have produced in Germany, where general education and intellectual development naturally produce higher social ideals, that semi-political and semi-social movement which now threatens to become a disturbing factor in the organisation of society, and which conjures up from time to time the spectre of a social revolution, in spite of the protection afforded by bayonets and standing armies.

The rapid growth of this movement is remarkable. Since the organisation of the Socialistic party by Lassalle, the number of adherents has marvellously increased, in spite of intestine dissensions, and the comparative incapacity of some of its leaders. The sum spent in agitation is over fifteen thousand pounds per annum. The journals of the party have risen to fifty in number, besides other minor publications. In the last election but one, a tenth of all the votes in the Germanic Empire were Socialistic, and twelve Socialists were returned as members of the national legislature,* an extraordinary result, to use the words

* *The Times*, March 22nd, 1877.—The result of the last election in the current year appears to be less favourable to the Socialists in reducing the number from twelve to eight members. But this loss is amply made up for by the formidable minorities recorded in their behalf in all the larger and more industrial towns. And this is all the more remarkable just now, when the attempts on the life of the emperor have alienated the public, among the middle classes, at least, from Socialism, and when all the available State influence has been brought to bear on the elections.

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of *The Times* correspondent, for a movement not twenty years old; and we may add, also, a result containing a solemn warning to those who are in the habit of treating with contempt these Socialistic schemes as undeserving of serious attention. Those who will persist in smiling at these "dreams of babies," and in ignoring the existence of social disharmonies, which are as fuel to the flame of Socialistic agitation, are the greatest enemies of social order, crying peace, peace, where there is no peace. Yet such are often the men who receive the attention and undeserved gratitude of their fellow-citizens.

Thus, *e.g.* a statue was erected the other day to a man of great worth, but one whose erroneous apologies of existing social arrangements have done much to defer social reforms, and, consequently, helped in stimulating the spirit of revolution. F. Bastiat, whose statue was unveiled in April last by M. Léon Say, had made it his object to show the perfect "harmony in the self-constituted organisation of free society, and never ceased to proclaim that its laws, too, were natural, and were best fitted to promote our material welfare if the foolish wisdom of half-taught men would allow them unfettered action."

It is rather remarkable that almost within a month of this public manifestation of agreement with the principle here laid down, the world should

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be shocked by a double attempt on the life of the Emperor of Germany by men deeply saturated with Socialistic ideas, although acting without any authority, from, and afterwards solemnly discarded, by the Socialist Associations. If the present resultant of the acting forces in the "mechanism of industrial society" were as satisfactory as Bastiat and others would have them to be, the dangers from Socialistic agitation could not be what they are. There would be no need for special laws and repressive measures against it, for it would disappear entirely in the absence of real support in the minds and hearts of the people.

It is the merit of Lassalle to have, if not exploded entirely, at least considerably weakened, this theory of social harmony. In trying to dispel the delusion he may have overstated the truth in a contrary direction, by drawing an overcharged gloomy picture of our present society and presenting the shadowy side of our social system in an exaggerated form. Nevertheless, in doing so he arrested the attention of the true friends of humanity, and paved the way towards social reforms. If he magnified the existing disorganisation of society, where individuals are but too frequently victimised in the progress of the race, if he described in too lurid colours the planless struggle for the mastery, and the aimless hunt after

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success, in which all join without concert and without union, hustling and jostling against each other in the interminable warfare of one against all and all against one, and called this a state of social anarchy, he at least showed the dire necessity of restoring a state of things where these evils will be remedied, and the sufferings of humanity will be lessened.

His own scheme is open to serious objection ; the fate of which he speaks as overhanging the present commercial world, with all its contingencies, would not be removed by resorting to the mode of production he suggests by means of State authority.

The foresight of capitalistic speculation, guided by self-interest, is a far better security against these evils than the most vigilant observation of central commissions appointed by the State which he recommends. "The cold, inexorable fate of the ancients introduced into our modern *bourgeoisie*," cannot be exorcised by the wand of governmental Prosperos. Social conjunctures affecting the condition of the people cannot be decreed away by Act of Parliament. Time and experience in the future, as in the past, will suggest legislative measures and efforts of private benevolence with a view to remove the evils resulting from them by degrees and without revolutionary changes.

Again, Lassalle's constant appeals to force, now

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turning to absolute monarchy, then again to democracy, to serve his purpose of improving the condition of the labouring people, will find little sympathy in a country like this, jealous of its liberties and averse to State control.

His intolerant opposition to the well-meant efforts of co-operation, to the utter exclusion almost of the principle of self-help, are without excuse in one who believed in social evolution, and who ought, therefore, to have looked upon such small beginnings as the promise of a gradual spread of co-operative institutions in the distant future which he had in view.

His utterly ignoring St. Simon's great principle to respect the religious factor in calculating with the forces in society, and his disregard of the moral impetus required for raising man, have borne bitter fruit in the subsequent development of the movement down to our own day in retarding, directly and indirectly, the social improvement of the masses from within and without. He thus encouraged the materialistic tendencies of his followers, who, in this respect, however, only imitate what has been called the "ethical materialism" of the higher classes, and helped in withdrawing from it all moral and religious enthusiasm, as well as the sympathy and support of the religious world and men of culture.

On the other hand, the work of this German

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O'Connor has not been without some good results. He has done much in educating the operatives of Germany in economic science, and impressing the minds of the philanthropists and social reformers with the conviction "that something must be done" to bring about a more satisfactory relationship between rich and poor—with a view to solve pending social questions.* The steady, the very slow rise of wages, the possibility of which Lassalle erroneously denied, may also be partly ascribed to the association spirit and the legalised system of combination among the workmen which his agitation called forth.

Lastly, though reckless in his agitation against what he considered the abuses of the times, Lassalle remaining strictly within the lines of nationalism, as distinguished from the Internationalism of later days, prepared the minds of the labourers for that loyal support they afforded to the establishment of German unity in the great national struggle of 1870–71, which must ever be remembered in their favour.

If Lassalle erred in many respects he could plead at least honesty of purpose, for he had nothing to gain and much to lose in the part he played. "No one," says a lady who knew him intimately, his faults

* Even Prince Bismarck, whose coquettings with Lassalle are well known, has made quite lately some suggestions as to State-help in the formation of co-operative societies.

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as well as his virtues, "who heard him could doubt the honesty of his convictions." Standing, as he says he did throughout, "on the height of a volcano," we must not wonder that his conduct is sometimes uncertain and inconsistent; that he coquets at times with the representatives of the autocracy, and shows tender feelings towards leaders of Ultramontanism; that his letters to his intimates do not always correspond to his utterances before mixed assemblies. Such inconsistencies are peculiar to all great popular leaders.

That a man with such giant powers should also have great faults is only what we expect. That there was something of the grandeur of a Cæsar, and a great deal of the spirit of a Catiline in him, is acknowledged by one of his most friendly biographers. It is the fate of such men to be overpraised by friends and underrated by enemies. But, as the same authority remarks in another place, "the flood of time washes away the errors, humanity inherits the rest."

Lassalle died in his fortieth year. The inscription over his tomb is from the pen of the great scholar Böckh: "Here lies all that is mortal of Ferdinand Lassalle, thinker, and man of war." From the lips of well-instructed men, bitter enemies of the cause which Lassalle espoused, the present writer, in a

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recent tour in Germany, has heard frequently words of regret that Lassalle is no more, together with the assurance that Socialism would never have sunk so low and become such a dangerous power in the State under the wise guidance of such a master-mind as was that of Ferdinand Lassalle.

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CHAPTER XIII.

KARL MARX AND THE LATEST SOCIALISTIC THEORY.

KARL MARX is a star of first magnitude among the constellations of modern Socialism, but, in some respects, resembles Byron's "melancholy star:"

> Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
> A night-beam sorrow watcheth to behold,
> *Distinct, but distant—clear, but oh, how cold!*

The warmth of enthusiasm which characterises most social idealists is wanting in Marx. He exhibits but little feeling, except it be the bitterness of indignation and disgust at existing social conditions and the attempts made for their justification. When dwelling on these, his pen, indeed, is often "dipped in the poison of polemical acidity," but, generally speaking, his style is bald and dispassionate. However, if there is an absence of emotional sentimen-

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talism, there is a great deal of hard thinking and plain speaking in the writings of Karl Marx. He gives us a clear exposition of social evils following in the wake of our modern industry, founded on facts and figures, and mainly drawn from official reports and parliamentary inquiries. Declamatory phrases and sweeping assertions are carefully avoided, and Marx's statements, if not always taking in the whole truth, are, at least, trustworthy as far as they go, and though he presents us exclusively with the dismal side of contemporary social life, he cannot be accused of wilful misrepresentation.

As he is clear in his statement of facts, so, too, Marx is rigidly logical in his deductions from the first principles of political economy, which he accepts from the old masters. Thus, for example, from their dogma that labour is the source of all values, Marx arrives, in pushing the argument founded on it to the farthest extremity, at the conclusion that all appropriation of wealth on the part of those who do not work must be malappropriation.

So, again, he endeavours to lay down, with almost mathematical precision, the theory that the growth of capital is entirely due to the insufficient remuneration of labour; that the difference between the value of work done, and the amount of wages paid, is the profit fraudulently obtained by the

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capitalist at the expense of the labourer. Marx accordingly arrives at the conclusion that all the produce of man's work ought to be divided among the workers of society, and looks forward with equanimity to the abolition of the class of capitalists in the course of a revolution which shall sweep away our present social system in favour of Communistic institutions.

Unfeeling in his theories, and unflinching in drawing his conclusions, Marx may be called a socialist Cato, whose motto is, "Society must be destroyed."

In one of his manifestoes he acknowledges, "Our objects can only be attained by a violent subversion of the social order."

Social reforms he regards as a mere farce, and the efforts of trades-unions to bring about a satisfactory adjustment of the claims of capital and labour he calls treason. What he wants is not reconciliation of conflicting interests, but war to the knife against capitalism, which is to end in the triumph of labour. To bring this about, he appeals to the united effort of all the workmen throughout the civilised world. "We must appeal to force," he says, in the congress of the Internationalists at the Hague, "to establish the rule of the labourers."

There is a remarkable contrast between the

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character and aims of the two most prominent leaders of modern Socialism; the genial, warm-hearted, boisterous agitator, Ferdinand Lassalle, and the cold, sullen, and almost insensible theoriser, Karl Marx. The former is a patriotic nationalist, and a believer in State Socialism; the latter a cosmopolitan internationalist, and a believer in the most abstract form of universal Communism. Centralisation of State-power to bring about social changes in favour of the labourer is the ideal of Lassalle. Decentralisation and a network of independent communes all over the world, or, at least, a confederacy of European republics, form the Utopian vision of the latter. If Marx surpasses Lassalle in his breadth of view, taking in the whole social world at a glance, whereas the latter confines himself to the task of regenerating his own country, Lassalle, in the warmth of his human enthusiasm, glowing impulsiveness, and generous impetuosity, compares very favourably with Marx, who is "ever calculating, absorbed in subtilties, cold and reserved, drawing his life-breath, as it were, in the icy regions of an abstract cosmopolitanism."

Lassalle inspires personal interest, Karl Marx claims distant regard. But it is important to make his personal acquaintance now, before we enter upon his theory.

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Marx was born in Trêves, in 1818, the son of a barrister-at-law, and was married to a sister of a reactionary Minister of State; and thus he belonged by birth and marriage to that small band of "middle-class dreamers and theorists" who of late years have become the most bitter opponents of the *bourgeoisie* with which they are connected.

He received his academical education at Bonn and Berlin, where he studied law and philosophy with a view to qualify himself for a State appointment at one of the Universities. But circumstances or the bent of character drew him away from this course. He came to be a contributor, and presently sole editor, of the *Rheinische Zeitung* ("Rhenish News"), which in its radical tendencies represented the rising social democracy of Germany before 1848.

Such were the bold attacks levelled in this paper against the reactionary measures of the Government, that a special Royal Censor had to be sent from Berlin to revise its columns, and when this proved fruitless its publication was stopped altogether by order of authority in 1843.

The political struggles and economic controversies of the day led Marx to the study of social questions, and he went actually to Paris for this purpose. One of the results of these studies was a critique of Proudhon's "Philosophy of Misery,"

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entitled the "Misery of Philosophy," which indicates the line of thought on the labour question developed in his later writings. About this time appeared the work by a congenial spirit, who has since become the most faithful satellite of Marx, the book of Friedrich Engels on the "Condition of the Operative Classes of England." Similar social views attracted the two men towards each other, and in the same year they published conjointly the "Manifesto of the Communist Party," which was adopted by a congress of labourers, held in London, and was translated into several European languages. It contains ideas on the unhappy condition of the Proletarians, and a historical criticism of society similar to those with which we have become already familiar in previous chapters, and concludes: "Communists discard the idea of concealing their views and intentions. They declare it openly that their objects can only be attained by means of a violent subversion of existing social order. Let the ruling classes tremble before the Communistic Revolution! The Proletarians have nothing to lose in it but their chains. They may win a whole world. Proletarians of all countries unite yourselves!" No wonder Marx was considered a dangerous subject after this. "Ever plodding and suspected," he was driven from one city to another. He was expelled from Brussels during the revolutionary panic of

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1848, and though invited to Paris by the Provisional Government, found it soon advisable to quit France and to return to Cologne, where, in conjunction with friends, he founded a new *Rheinische Zeitung*, which became the organ of the Revolution. Its publication was again stopped by Government, and Marx was ordered to leave the country. He went to Paris, and was expelled thence, and at last came to London, the home of so many exiles, where he has lived ever since in comparative seclusion and learned ease, surrounded by a circle of admiring disciples, who serve as a ready medium for communicating his ideas and conveying his orders to the Socialistic associations of the Continent.

Karl Marx continued at the British Museum library his economic studies, which resulted in the publication of an important work in 1859, a contribution "towards a critique of Political Economy, etc." It received further expansion in Karl Marx's *magnum opus*, "Das Kapital" (Capital), a second edition of which, published in 1872, enjoys a large circulation, has been translated into French and Russian, and forms the text-book of Modern Socialism. It is a work praised by friend and foe alike for the intellectual vigour, critical acuteness, and diligent research it displays, and an opponent of Marx's theory calls it "the greatest scientific production of modern

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German political economy." In this work are contained the theoretical views of Marx on the undue growth of capital and the wrongs of labour. It is the first instalment of a complete work on capital, to be succeeded by two more volumes, the publication of which is delayed by the ill-health and multifarious occupations of the author as the recognised head of the International and the virtual leader of Modern Socialism.

Marx then comes before us in the two-fold character of Socialistic theoriser and International agitator. His ideas on a speculative social philosophy may be drawn from his work on capital, as this contains his criticism on existing social order, whereas his positive proposals are to be gathered from the several programmes, statutes, and manifestoes of the party, which we are assured by his friend Engels have all been published under his direction, or have received at least his final revision.

Not to weary the reader with the elaborate statement of the first or critical exposition of Karl Marx's theories, we will only give a short abstract of his description of modern Proletarians in England, together with the causes he assigns for this phenomenon in its close connection with the "Genesis of Capital," and then proceed briefly to point out the remedies suggested by Karl Marx and his party from their

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own published documents, which may be regarded as the last schemes of social improvement up to the present day.

Dull and dismal, indeed, is the picture drawn by Karl Marx of low life among the English poor in town and country. He quotes from Dr. Hunter's report, made by order of the Privy Council (1862–63), on the condition of the agricultural labourer, the following passage: "The means of existence of the hind are fixed at the very lowest possible scale. What he gets in wages and domicile is not at all commensurate with the profit produced by his work. His means of subsistence are always treated as a fixed quantity; as for any further reduction of his income he may say: '*nihil habeo, nihil curo.*' He is not afraid of the future; he has reached zero, a point from which dates the farmer's calculation. Come what may, he takes no interest in either fortune or misfortune." As far as the present writer's experience as a country clergyman serves him, he must confess the condition of the agricultural labourer as here described has not much improved in the south-western counties of England, since the publication of this memorable report, notwithstanding many efforts, such as Canon Girdlestone's, in this direction.

On the slow improvement in the condition of the factory "hands," notwithstanding the enormous

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growth of wealth in the country, speeches of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Fawcett are quoted in attestation of this melancholy fact. In 1863 Mr. Gladstone had said: "The fact is astonishing and scarcely credible, of this intoxicating increase of wealth and power confined entirely to the possessing classes. But it must be of indirect advantage to the labouring population, in cheapening the ordinary articles of consumption . . . . that the extremes, however, of poverty have been modified, I dare not say." Speaking of the masses on the brink of pauperism, of branches of trade where wages have not risen, he concludes by saying, regarding the labouring classes generally: "That human life, in seven cases out of ten, is a mere struggle for existence." Then Professor Fawcett, who, according to Marx, is reasoning in a similar way, but uses plainer and more outspoken language, unfettered by official reserve, he declares: "The rich are becoming rapidly wealthier, whereas no increase can be discerned in the comforts of the labouring classes. The means of livelihood are getting dearer, and working people become almost the slaves of those petty tradesmen whose debtors they are."

What is the cause of all this? Whence this constantly increasing chasm between unlimited accumulation of wealth on the one hand, and the increase of

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abject pauperism on the other? How is it that this age of progress has developed these dangerous extremes of luxury and misery? To this Marx replies that the growth of capital is entirely owing to the systematic appropriation of the surplus value of labour by the capitalist, and the inability of the labourer in his abject condition to defend himself against this systematic spoliation. He quotes with approval the words of the English socialist, J. Bellers, pronounced more than two hundred years ago: "The labour of the poor represents the gold mines of the rich." Thus he considers that the creation of private fortunes is entirely brought about at the expense of wages labour. Profit is nothing else but unpaid labour. Wages do not represent the value of work rendered for which they are presumably the reward, but are only equal in value to the bare necessities required for the support of the labourer. In order to this, some of the necessaries of life, such as bread, fuel, &c.=(A) must be renewed daily, another part =(B) weekly, and a third=(C) monthly, in given quantities. Thus Marx puts the following formula as representing daily, *i.e.* necessary wages=

$$\frac{365\,A + 52\,B + 12\,C}{365}$$

Now, he says, although six hours' work daily

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might suffice to produce a value equal to this, still the labourer must work for his employer twelve or sixteen hours in order to receive a remuneration tantamount to it. Since labour must seek for employment, and in the struggle for existence must accept the lowest possible remuneration, the workingman, instead of receiving the full amount of the produce of his labour, must be satisfied with a sum just sufficient for his maintenance. What remains over and above this only serves for the augmentation of wealth in the hands of the capitalist.

In fine, Marx maintains that "capital is the most terrible scourge of humanity, that it fattens on the misery of the poor, the degradation of the worker, and the brutalising toil of his wife and children; just as capital grows so grow also pauperism, that millstone round the neck of civilisation, the revolting cruelties of our factory system, the squalor of great cities, and the presence of deep poverty seated hard by the gates of enormous wealth."

He shows from the history of factory legislation, and the reports of factory inspectors, the inhuman treatment of the "hands" by the employers before Factory Acts came into operation, and their repeated attempts to elude the provisions of the law for the protection of labour, so as to extort the greatest amount of work, on the principle that "moments

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are elements of profit," and that the prolongation of the labour-day, even by a few minutes a day, means an increase of thousands of pounds in the annual profits of the employer.

In the same way Marx shows that the much-praised subdivision of labour only serves to brutalise the labourer and to render his condition more deplorable than it was before the introduction of machinery, whereas it at the same time consolidates the irresponsible domination of capital and its power to multiply itself *ad infinitum*. He goes on to show that in the case of industry carried on with the help of machinery, which in a great number of cases becomes a simple substitute for manual labour, the danger exists of dispensing altogether with muscular power, and substituting the labour of the weak, the immature, and those of tender age, *i.e.* women and children. Thus the rate of wages is depressed, and the profit arising from underpaid labour flows into the pockets of the employers. Marx quotes from official sources the most astounding facts, showing the amount of misery and mortality and destruction of the family life resulting from this fact. The mortality of children is greatest where women are employed in factory labour, and where the children, from want of proper food and the use of opiates, and in some cases even intentional starvation

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and drugging, become the victims of unnatural parents. On the other hand, the same official reports show how, in agricultural districts, where but a very small number of women are employed, the mortality of children is less in proportion. "It will be in fact a blessing," says one of the inspectors, R. Baker, in his official report, "for the manufacturing districts of England, to forbid every married woman who has a family to work in a factory."

He also alludes to the painful results of every transition state, occasioned by the introduction of new machinery, which throws so many labourers out of employ. In answer to the apologists for industry by machinery, who maintain that this is not the fault of machinery itself, but its employment by capital, Marx has a ready retort. "So then," he says, "because machinery, considered by itself, does shorten the hours of labour, whilst in its employment by capital it lengthens the labour-day; because in itself it lightens labour, but as used by capital it intensifies toil; because in itself it represents the victory of man over nature, but as applied by capital it subdues man under the dominion of nature; because in itself it increases the wealth of the producer, but as used by capital it impoverishes him; etc. etc., *therefore* the political economist simply explains that machinery considered by itself plainly

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proves that these palpable contradictions are mere appearances, but have in reality and in theory no existence. Thus the political economist does not trouble himself any further, but calls his opponent stupid for opposing machinery as such, instead of the capitalistic mode of its application."

Again, Marx dwells on the evils of "starvation diseases," consequent upon insufficient nourishment, and the brutal waste of human life occasioned by over-exertion in labour hours, and the unhealthy condition of the workman's dwelling-place, and insists on the appointment of a normal day of labour by State authority, sanitary laws, and improved education, to prevent the further decay in body and mind of the working-classes.

At the same time he holds out little hope of gaining much for the labourers by such legislative expedients. He looks forward rather with grim satisfaction to the time when with the farthest extension of the present unhealthy development of capital, a reaction will set in at last, a convulsion will take place, and those who have all along appropriated to themselves the results of other men's labours will themselves be dispossessed, and those who are now despoiled will in turn occupy their places. He regards the growth of wholesale trade, and the gradual concentration of the land in the

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hands of a few large landed proprietors, as a school of Communism, which also requires large bodies of men engaged in the same pursuit to work in companies by means of subdivision in labour under a central authority. The only change required consists in the change of government. The "monarchical head" (*i.e.* the wholesale manufacturer and large landed proprietor) is removed, and the machinery can go on just as before, only under different directors. The servants becoming masters, distinctions between employer and employed are removed altogether; the many, and not the few, will rule.

The present process of extinction of all small holders of land and capital in their competition with agricultural and mercantile magnates, and the concentration of all property in a few hands,* will speedily be accomplished, and with it the impoverishment and degradation of the people, who, exasperated at last, and disciplined for resistance by reason of intolerable grievances, will turn against the oppressors and spoliators. Then comes the deluge. "The expropriators are expropriated."

* This is also alluded to by Mr. Ruskin in a characteristic passage. Speaking of the rich capitalist, he complains that by reason of superior advantages he can "use his breadth and sweep of sight to gather some branch of the commerce of the country into one great cobweb, of which he is himself to be the central spider, making every thread vibrate with the points of his claws, and commanding every avenue with the facets of his eyes."—*Political Economy of Art, p.* 172.

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There is less difficulty in this than in the former process of spoliation. In the former case it was a question of expropriation of large masses of the people by a few usurpers: now it is only a question of "expropriation of a few usurpers by the mass of the people."

In thus deducing from existing circumstances the future abolition of private property in favour of the people, and the substitution of collective property and co-operative universal labour on scientific principles, not, as "now, for the aggrandisement of the few, but for the common good and comfort of all that toil," Marx differs from those Communists whose Utopias have been already considered. They pictured to themselves a state of things where human beings are quite different from the men and women we meet in daily life, whereas Marx takes the world as he finds it, and looks upon the evolution of Communism out of our present social condition as unavoidable, according to the laws of natural development. He regards without emotion the advancing wave of anarchical tendencies which are to bring about a transitional social catastrophe. He is satisfied to be both the prophet of evil, announcing the decree of the Nemesis of history, which sweeps away our old institutions, and the "bringer of good tidings," proclaiming the advent of a new era, when,

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with the enjoyment of perfect material equality, the evils prevailing among ourselves will be banished from human society.

Marx, in his imperturbable calm, thus foreseeing coming calamities to the human race in order to its final regeneration, appears to us in the light of those "idealists who create a political terror; they are free from all desire for blood-shedding; but to them the lives of men and women are accidents; the lives of ideas are the true realities; and armed with an *abstract principle and a suspicion*, they perform deeds which are at once beautiful and hideous."

Happily, Karl Marx has not been tempted as yet, however, to deeds, and we are simply left, for the present, to consider his theories. This has now been done on the negative side of his theoretical system. We shall proceed to give an account of his positive proposals in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER XIV.

KARL MARX AND THE INTERNATIONAL.

"In 1848, the principles of Socialism had been partly carried into practice," says Sir Thomas Erskine May in his "History of Democracy in Europe," "and since that time they had been further extended by the International Society,* and by French and German writers." We shall show in this last chapter the influence of Karl Marx and the International Society on the latest development of the Social Democracy. We ask then, what is the latest scheme of social improvement presented for our examination in the successive official documents of contemporary Socialists? To answer this question we must slightly retrace our steps, in order to mark the successive movements of the Socialistic party founded by Lassalle, and its relative position to the party attached to Karl

* Vol. ii. p. 325.

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Marx, their mutual approaches, and occasional departures from each other, ending in their final reunion at the Congress at Gotha in 1875; for this marks the close of an epoch, the final victory of the principles of the *International*, and the triumph of universal Communist principles over State Socialism and the more moderate demands of Lassalle.

For ten years after the death of Lassalle the party he had organised presented a lamentable spectacle of incapacity among the leaders, and mean jealousies and mutual suspicion in the rank and file of the party.

These internal divisions weakened the party and presented it in an unfavourable light before the world at large. Marx, although by reason of his intellectual superiority the natural head of the movement, was unwilling to become its acknowledged leader, and a small number of *rois fainéants* succeeded each other, from Becker, the immediate successor of Lassalle, styling himself the "president of humanity," downwards, until Baron von Schweitzer, a really able man, at last succeeded, in 1867, to supplant the lesser lights of the association in the presidential chair. "Then," says Mehring, "the modern Alexander (*i.e.* Lassalle), who had gone out to conquer a new world of bliss, had found at last the one most worthy to become his successor."

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But now, too, began the agitation of Liebknecht, the "apostle of the International," and the intimate associate, and, some assert, the emissary of Karl Marx, to create opposition in Germany against the "Imperialist Socialism" of the followers of Lassalle, and to make propaganda among the German working-men in favour of the unmitigated Communism of the more abstract scheme of international Socialists.

The ultimate result of these machinations was a division of the socialistic camp into two fractions at the Congress at Eisenach in 1869, which continued to exist side by side until they were reunited at the Congress of Gotha, by means of a compromise which, as we have already stated, practically amounted to a victory of the extreme party. The causes of this departure from the more moderate counsels of Lassalle may be traced partly to external events, and partly to internal government. The immediate cause was the misery among the labourers, occasioned by the swindle period of mercantile speculation which followed after the liquidation of the war indemnity paid by France to Germany, and the commercial crash which followed. Among the more remote influences may be mentioned the additional liberties granted to the people at the formation of the North German Confederation, liberties for which the former state of political tutelage had not prepared them

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sufficiently; the passing of laws permitting free combination among the men, which led to strikes, and the tumultuous movements to which they generally give rise; the sudden removal of former trade restrictions and the laws of settlement, which considerably disturbed existing economic relations, and caused unusual commotion among the masses; and, last of all, the establishment of manhood suffrage in the German Empire, which unexpectedly increased the political power of, and served as a handle for party purposes, and a stimulus for party organisation, among the members of the Social Democracy.

The absence of leaders equal in mental capacity to Lassalle gave the advantage to the opposite party, acting under the spiritual, though not nominal, supremacy of Karl Marx, whose avowed adherents, moreover, were well represented in the press, and appeared on the scene as the wire-pullers of that supposed all-powerful society, that formidable bugbear of modern Europe, the International.

It is not to be wondered that this so-called secret society, which is supposed to have sent a thrill of trembling awe into the hearts of prominent statesmen, should exercise a fascinating influence over the bands of German labourers and their half-taught leaders.

This society, which, we are told, "was begun in

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a dream, and terminated in a fiasco," had London for its birthplace, and Karl Marx for its progenitor, as far, at least, as its official programme is concerned.*

In the same year in which Lassalle breathed his last, and about a month after this important event in the history of Socialism, the public inauguration of the International Association took place, in St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, and during the winter months of 1864–65 a great many members were enrolled, in consequence of the active operations of the society and its affiliated branches.

In 1865 delegates from several European countries met in London, for the purpose of conferring with the General Council on the programme of the "first

* Mr. Howell, in an article on this subject in "The Nineteenth Century" for July, shows that this was not the first attempt of the kind in London, and mentions among the causes of its formation the following: "The proximate causes, briefly stated, which led to the formation of the 'International Working Men's Association' are these: (1) The establishment of the Polish League, by means of which many of the continental workmen and refugees were brought into frequent contact with the leading political working-men of London, when it was found that there were many points of agreement between the continental politicians and those in this country. (2) The outbreak of the war for Italian independence, which evoked a good deal of enthusiasm on the part of the working-classes of England in favour of a free Italy, liberated alike from petty despots and from priestly domination. (3) The great strike and lock-out in the building trades in London in 1859–60, which created a considerable amount of sympathy on the continent of Europe in consequence of its being a struggle for a reduction in the hours of labour, and not a mere contest for extra or

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Congress," which was to assemble at Geneva, in September, 1866. Mr. Howell, in the article already referred to, complains of the predominating influence of the "foreign element," which could hardly be avoided in an "international association," of which Karl Marx was undoubtedly, for good or for evil, the ruling spirit.

Mr. Howell calls him, rather contemptuously, a "German 'doctor' named Karl Marx," as some years ago Pius IX. spoke of Dr. Cumming as a certain Dr. Cumming of Scotland. The parallel, however, is not quite complete, for Mr. Howell (and he will

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increased pay. A favourable opportunity was thus afforded for communications between the working-class leaders of London and the more intensely political workmen of the Continent. (4) The civil war in America, which kindled an enthusiasm in the hearts of most of the more active political leaders of the working-classes in favour of the North, as against what they termed the slave-holding South, and which eventually led to the immense meeting in St. James's Hall, on March 26, 1863, presided over by Mr. John Bright; this gave further opportunities for intercommunication between the continental workmen and those resident in London." Karl Marx, in "The Secular Chronicle," 20th August, 1878, referring to this article in "The Nineteenth Century," complains that Mr. Howell does not mention him as present at the "foundation meeting" of the International, where he was chosen a member of the Provisional General Council, and soon after drew up the "inaugural address" and the general statements of the Association, first issued in London in 1864, and confirmed by the Geneva Congress of 1866.

The author is indebted for this correction to Mr. Karl Marx, who, although a perfect stranger and an opponent to the views set forth in this volume, has been kind enough to correct the biographical and historical portions of this and the previous chapter.

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forgive our naming him "among the prophets") rather corresponds to the Dr. Cumming in local fame, known as a friend of the labourers of England, whereas Karl Marx is the real Pope of the Socialist world, and is now a man of European notoriety.

"Whatever follies or blunders the International may subsequently have been guilty of or have committed, its early object was to bring men of different countries together for practical purposes; and the majority of those who were its 'founders' were well-informed and moderate men," says Mr. Howell. Having for its object, as its title implies, "a grand fraternity of peoples," it turned its attention from the very first to social rather than political questions, seeking an amelioration of the labourer's condition in the reduction of the hours of toil, the rise of wages, the prevention of an introduction of foreign labour in case of strikes, and its chief aim was "to have a perfect understanding with all men whose prospects are in peace, in industrial development, in freedom and human happiness all over the world."

The original programme laments the fact that the condition of the masses had not improved in the same ratio as the wealth of the upper and middle classes, and it lamented the existence of deep distress and social misery side by side with enormous wealth and extravagant luxury. It regarded as a hopeful

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sign the extension of Factory Acts for the protection of labour, and the development of co-operation as the earnest of further social reform. To secure them they count on the power of numbers, and the "bond of brotherhood," which finds in union strength, and lays down as the principle for common action "that the International Association, and all societies and individuals adhering to it, will acknowledge truth, justice, and morality as the bases of their conduct towards each other and towards all men, without regard to colour, creed, or nationality."

It states its intention also to struggle "for equal rights and duties of all men, on the ground that rights carry with them corresponding duties, the one as sacred as the other."* It recognises that the emancipation of the working-classes must be brought about by their own efforts, and that the economic dependence of the labourer on the owner of the monopoly in the instruments of labour, which are the sources of livelihood (*i.e.* the landed proprietors and the employers), is the foundation of servitude in every form, of social distress, mental degradation, and political subjection; that the economic emancipation of the labouring classes, therefore, is the great object to which every political movement

* "The Nineteenth Century" for June, 1878, pp. 29, 30.

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must become subservient as the means to an end.*

The two next Congresses, at Geneva and Lausanne, were engaged mainly in registering the principles laid down by Karl Marx in his London programme, when the discussion of abstract principles on politics and religion and social theories, on property and kindred subjects, alienated the more practical and less philosophical members of the International, especially the English labourers. The withdrawal of the common-sense matter-of-fact section of the Association had for its effect that moderate counsels were no longer or less distinctly heard than heretofore, and in the next Congress, at Basle, the men of "fantastic theories" decreed: (1) "That the community possesses the right to abolish all individual realised property, and to transform it into common property; and (2) That it is in the interest of the commonwealth that such a transformation should take place;" in other words, that the institution of private property had best be abolished altogether. One more strictly

* The programme is characterised by the French historian Henri Martin, in a letter to *The Siècle*, as follows: "The breadth of view and the high moral, political, and economical conceptions which have decided the choice of questions composing the programme of the International Congress of working-men, which is to assemble next year, will strike with a common sympathy all friends of progress, justice, and liberty in Europe."

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œcumenical Congress of the society took place after that at the Hague, at which the International, as a whole, ceased to exist, owing to dissensions among the delegates, and since then, notwithstanding some attempts made to resuscitate the society, it seems to have lost its former prestige and terror as an organised institution.

Nevertheless its two leading ideas: (1) The solidarity of interest among the labourers all over the world; and (2) The consciousness of strength in their united effort to bring about the emancipation of labour from its subjection to capital, continue to occupy the minds of the working-classes, and influence the debates and resolutions of the Social Democracy in the present day.

It would, therefore, be the height of folly to underrate the latent power of the nearly extinct International to become at any moment the rallying-point of labourers of various countries should some unforeseen political event or strong social commotion serve as the impulse for such an organisation. The main principles of the International are likely to find acceptance when social disorder and social distress among the labouring people prepare the ground for social agitation. The facts that the number of its paying adherents was ridiculously small from the beginning, that its means were insignificant, and that

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very few prominent men have at any time joined its ranks, have been noted to show the absurdity of the dread which its secrecy inspired as quite out of proportion to the magnitude of its real danger.*

The danger is not to be sought in the strength of the organisation in wealth and importance, but in the sullen dissatisfaction of the thousands who are ready to listen to its voice and to march at its bidding. The prophecy of the great German economist Thünen threatens to be fulfilled in his own country at the present moment. "If once the people, roused out of their slumber, shall ask the question, and seek

* What are the hopes of Socialism on this head may be seen from the following, another quotation from the article of Karl Marx already referred to: "In reality, the social democratic working-men's parties, organised on a more or less national scale in Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Hungary, and the United States of America, form as many international groups, no longer single sections thinly scattered through different countries, and held together by an eccentric General Council, but the working masses themselves, in continuous, active, direct intercourse, cemented by sameness of struggle, exchange of thought, mutual services, and common aspiration. After the fall of the Paris Commune, all working-class organisation in France was of course temporarily broken, but is now in an incipient state of re-forming. On the other hand, despite all political and social obstacles, the Slavs, chiefly in Poland, Bohemia, and Russia, participate at present in this international movement to an extent not to be foreseen by the most sanguine in 1872. Thus, instead of dying out, the International did only pass from its period of incubation to a higher one where its original tendencies have in part become realities. In the course of its progressive development, it will yet have to undergo many a change before the last chapter of its history can be told."

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practically to solve it: 'What is the natural reward of labour?' a conflict is likely to ensue which, it is to be feared, may spread destruction and barbarism throughout Europe."

It is the dread of this which spreads dismay throughout Germany, and leads to the adoption of measures against it which are inadequate for the purpose.

This exaggerated fear of Socialism, almost amounting to national frenzy, has already influenced the legislature to pass severe measures of repression. But this, so far from averting the impending danger, will only turn the sore inwards. Ideas cannot be conquered by police regulations, but ought to be met by intellectual weapons. Popular movements of this sort are not to be put down by main force. In the words of one of the most strictly conservative opponents of Socialism in Germany:

"There is one thing which can kill the International, and *only one: Satisfaction, contentment of the masses of the people, in securing for them a proportionate increase in the enjoyments of the blessings of culture, and the benefits arising from the growth of national productivity.*"

This leads us, in the last place, to inquire what are the latest demands of the Social Democracy. The Gotha programme of the German Labour Party gives

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an official reply. It contains the resolution of the united Socialistic parties, and represents the common opinions of the International and Social Democracy of Germany as inspired by Karl Marx.

In the first place it states in full the Socialistic, or rather Communistic, principles, and then points out the practical aims of the German Social Democracy. In the next place it specifies in detail the bases of the Socialistic State and enumerates the demands of the party on our present society.

The principles are stated as follows:

Labour is the source of all wealth and all culture, and as in general productive labour is only possible through society, hence to society—*i.e.* to all its members—belongs the aggregate product of labour, with the universal duty of work according to equal right, to each according to his reasonable wants.

In the present society the means of labour are a monopoly of the capitalist class; the dependence of the labouring class in consequence thereof is the cause of misery and slavery in every form.

The liberation of labour requires the conversion of the means of labour into the common property of society, and the regulation of the aggregate labour by the community, with utilisation for the common benefit and equitable distribution of the product of labour.

The liberation of labour must be the work of the labouring class, in opposition to which all other classes are only a reactionary mass.

Starting from these principles, the Socialist labourer party of Germany strives, with all legal means, after the free state and the socialist society, the destruction of the brazen law of wages

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by means of abolishing the system of wages-labour, the removal of spoliation in every form, and of every social and political inequality.

The Socialist labourer party of Germany demands, in order to pave the way for the solution of the social question, the establishment of socialistic co-operative societies, for production aided by the State, and under the democratical control of the labouring people. The productive associations are to be called into existence for the purposes of manufacture and agriculture to such an extent that out of them may arise the socialistic organisation for labour in common.

The bases of the Socialistic State are stated to be, in brief: Universal suffrage, voting being compulsory on all from their twentieth year; direct legislation by, and free administration of justice for, the people, who are also to decide on questions of peace and war, are all to bear arms and to form a National Guard; the abolition of all laws interfering with the free expression of opinion; equal, universal, and compulsory education for all, free of charge, in State institutions; and finally, religion is to be declared a matter of private opinion.

The demands on existing society are simply the utmost extension of political rights and liberties; with the abolition of indirect taxation, a progressive income-tax, freedom of combination, a normal labour day, protection of women and children working in factories, and sanitary measures and

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State supervision affecting all who labour in mines, workshops, and manufactories; the legal responsibility of employers for injuries received by workingmen in the performance of their duties; the regulation of prison labour, and complete independence in the administration of all funds for the relief and support of labourers.

Such are the actual demands, and the social theories on which they are based, of the best-educated association of labourers in modern Europe, more or less under the tutorship of the most scientifically trained of all Socialist writers, Karl Marx.

An able work on "Social Architecture," written by "An Exile from France," and giving a clear and painstaking account of the general demands of contemporary Socialism, summarises the guiding principles upon which the demolition and reconstruction of society is to be brought about as follows:

(1) Abolition of money, inheritance, and private property, (2) Restriction of the isolated household, and development of the associated home. (3) Freedom of sexual unions. (4) Compulsory and equal sharing of all physical labour. (5) Economical arrangements for the prevention of waste. (6) Organisation of labour. (7) Equal division of the means of existence and enjoyment. (8) Universal diffusion of education, science, and arts.

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This is the final resultant of all the Utopian dreams and social speculations which have passed in review, before the reader's mind in perusing the chapters of which this forms the last in this volume.

We have wandered now over three hundred years of social scheming, from More to Marx, from the Reformation and the revival of learning to the first Revolution and its two successors, and thence to the present day. We have seen the same seething among the masses, the same longing for a change, the same recurrence of social upheavals occurring periodically, preceded or accompanied by the appearance of social innovators and reformers, mostly men of social rank, higher culture, and moral elevation, who have given voice to the people's hopes and wishes, and in their writings and agitation producing after many days some of the good results they aimed at, though in fragmentary instalments.

We have seen, moreover, Socialism adapting itself to the various forms of societies, keeping pace with the historical developments of peoples, moving with the times, until we find it culminating in the gradual evolution of the most abstract form of Socialism in the present day. Its doctrines are now stated in precise formulas by Marx, and its demands preferred in terms bordering on legal

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technicality in the programme of Gotha. Utopian fictions have developed into Socialist facts, vague speculations have assumed the form of theorems, and the hazy conceptions of the earlier authors of Utopias have been crystallised into hard dogmas which challenge refutation or acceptance at the hands of economists and statesmen. It does by no means follow that claims pragmatically preferred, as in the last manifesto of the Labour League at Gotha, deserve, on this account, more attention than the more vague demands of earlier Socialists, or that the dogmatising theories of Karl Marx contain less mischievous error than the less confident assertions of his predecessors. The superiority of the most recent forms of Utopianism over previous schemes of social improvement consists in their more systematised and tangible manner of stating grievances and demanding redress, in formulating theories and suggesting legislative measures which admit of serious criticism and practical treatment, and make it possible at least to politicians, economists, and philanthropists to meet Socialism with arguments, and measures to remove grievances real or supposed, to give, in fine, a scientific reply to erroneous doctrines propounded with intended scientific precision.

Elsewhere the attempt has been made to show

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the fallacy contained in Marx's theory of value, which he himself regards as the keystone of his system as well as the supposed axiomatic truth which appears in the first sentence of the Gotha programme, that "labour is the source of all wealth and all culture."*

This is not the place to enter into a controversy on these theories. Suffice it to say, not to weary the reader with economic disquisitions, that mental in addition to manual labour, the directing head as well as the working hand, are required for the production of all valuable commodities. That the products of nature add to the wealth of nations, and that the value of all commodities must in a measure depend on the social circumstances of time and place, and the varying condition of the individuals who require them. Moreover, to make the time required for the production of commodities the only standard measure of their value, and to say, as does Marx, that the value of any article is tantamount to the time spent in manufacturing it, would lead to the absurd result that the most indolent men, in wasting the greatest possible amount of time over their work, produce the most valuable

* In the author's work on "Socialism," book i. chap. iii., specially p. 31 *et seq.*, on Value. Also cf. book iii. chap. vi., on the general system of Karl Marx, p. 164 *et seq.*

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commodities. Indeed, Marx would reply that it is "average social labour," both as to time and quality, which forms the standard; but such an average it is impossible to strike, owing to the varying capacities of human beings in different countries and placed in different circumstances. In addition to which it has to be remembered that all work done, even without a wasteful expenditure of time in the course of production, is not of equal utility; it is important to value labour done not only by what is actually produced in many hours, but also by the usefulness or uselessness of the commodities so produced; whether in our own society, governed by the laws of supply and demand, or in the prospective Socialist community, with its stereotyped normal wants and supplies for each individual.

The risk of producing valueless commodities is now borne by the capitalist; society would have to bear such losses in a state of Communism, and all alike would suffer accordingly. With regard to the demands put forward by the Gotha programme, whilst some are of a moderate nature, and others, like most of the points of the People's Charter in this country, are likely to be granted before the close of the century, although they meet with virulent opposition now—still others, tending as they do to establish an unmitigated Communism, seriously

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interfering with the exercise of individual liberty, and removing the incentives for exertion and frugality, do not commend themselves to the practical good sense of the majority of mankind. In the absence of any appeal to a higher moral and religious enthusiasm of humanity and self-devotion for the common good, such as the less scientific social innovators presupposed in their schemes, it is impossible to see how a socialistic community, such as the authors of the programme anticipate, could ever exist at all, much less surpass in prosperity and happiness our present society.

The appointment to each individual of a sufficiency of means "according to his reasonable wants," and the allotment of work to be done in return by him "according to equal right," by socialistic State authority, to secure an equitable distribution of labour and enjoyment, will appear to our readers as hopelessly Utopian as any of the least scientific schemes, and more so than some of those which have now been considered in order.

Still, with the growth of intelligence among the labourers themselves, and the increased interest felt for their welfare among those in authority, with the growing consciousness of social duty of individuals towards the community, and the reciprocal duty of all classes, high and low, towards each

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other, many social reforms will become possible, and those, or at least some of those, results which are aimed at in Utopias will be attained, though in a different form from that anticipated by their promoters.

Thus, *e.g.* the "fanaticism of association," as it has been called, may be productive of a healthy growth of the co-operative system in manufactures, and instead of "a federation of autonomic and landowning communes," we may witness a gradual development of co-operative farming, the beginnings of which we are watching at the present moment.

Thus, too, time and the logic of facts will correct some of the startling axioms put forward with so much assurance by Socialists, whilst some of the unpalatable truths renounced by them will at last meet with reluctant acceptance and bear fruit in social reforms. The repeated complaints of successive Socialisms all point to the same social evils: the faulty distribution of property, the increasing gulf between rich and poor, the waste and monotony of labour, the extravagances of wealth, depopulation of the country, and crowding into large cities of the poor; the helplessness of the latter in the struggle for existence, the tyranny of capital, the responsibility of society to protect them against the iron fate which renders them impotent in the

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attempt to raise themselves, the claim of all to an equal share of happiness, the necessity of reform in education for that purpose, and of State help to encourage co-operation—such and similar recurring demands seem to point to a natural instinct in the human heart, at all times and in all places, to seek a remedy for the same social disease, and that the same symptoms of what has been called the "great malady of the nineteenth century," have appeared in every great and stirring epoch of human history.

Such social phenomena reappearing at stated times, like certain periodical convulsions of nature, are the proper study of social science and Christian philanthropy, so as to provide against social catastrophes by timely social improvements. The proper attitude towards Socialism is to regard it as a movement of mankind towards progress which requires to be checked and to be conducted into safe channels. It may be moderated by the friends of humanity, it cannot be stifled. It is not well at one time to depreciate its force and tendency, treating it with indifference and contempt, and then again during sudden panics to be frightened beyond measure by the appearance of the "red spectre" of a communist republic.

At all times Socialism is rampant where society

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is disorganised; it is most powerful in Germany now, because, as one of its opponents tells us, "in no country is the war of classes so openly declared as it is in Germany." It reflects at all times the worst abuses of society at the time of its reappearance, and perhaps its irrational demands for perfect equality at this moment may be only the counterpart of that love of inequality which Matthew Arnold has lately told us "is really the vulgarity in us, and the brutality, of admiring and worshipping the splendid materiality" of the age, which seeks in self-indulgence its highest good. And so, too, the antagonistism of modern Socialists towards religion, which is one of the most deplorable aspects of the movement, reflects the materialistic and irreligious tendency of the times. At the same time, it has to be remembered that it is against religionists who would make religious ministers a sort of "spiritual police" to keep the people in order, rather than against religion as such, that most Socialists direct their attacks.

But it is to be hoped that this unreasonable and virulent opposition to religion is only a passing phase of modern Socialism, and that with increased efforts of ministers of religion to promote the true temporal and spiritual welfare of the people, the irreverent tone of the Socialistic press and the

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vituperative effusions of Socialistic leaders will cease, as it becomes more and more recognised among them that true religion is the foundation of social morality, and therefore social happiness.*

But Socialism not only reflects in lurid colours social disease and decay, it becomes also the interpreter of the noblest thoughts and highest aspirations of the race, though the means adopted for their realisation may be impractical, and the schemes proposed for the solution of social enigmas may be comparatively worthless.

The International itself thus becomes the interpreter of the great principle which has come to the surface in the minds of men of late, *i.e.* the solidarity of the whole human race. It has taught the people of Europe as well as the working-classes that benevolent reciprocity allied to "industrial rivalry with-

* It is satisfactory to find that such a tendency to return to the good old paths may be traced in the following passages from the work on "Social Architecture," referred to already: "All great social reformers have at all times availed themselves of the religious feelings and convictions of their fellow-men; and as there never was, nor ever can be, a rational system of religion that does not preach the mutual love of all men, the close and intimate relation between Communism and religion justifies the endeavours which social reformers have made to harmonise religion with Communism." An article advising a conciliatory tone towards religion has also lately appeared in the "Zukunft," the most thoughtful and philosophical organ of the Socialist party in Germany, now suppressed in accordance with the late laws passed in the Imperial Parliament.

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out acrimony and envy," are likely to promote the prosperity of nations, and "that international feuds (whether in actual or commercial warfare) are the greatest enemies to progress and to the amelioration of the masses of the people."

So, too, the efforts of the German Social Democracy "have led and are likely to lead in the future to the conviction that the true interests of the individual and the community are best served in making true humane feeling our guide in the conduct of life."*

In its permanency, then, and its mobile force to adapt itself to the varying tendencies of the times, Socialism presents itself before us as a living principle in human nature, which has successively acted as an incentive to human progress, leading mankind from monopolism to panpolism, from utilitarianism to philanthropy, from egoism to altruism—in other words, from individual self-seeking to a sense of public duty, from self-love to love of the brethren, from the pursuit of our own interest at the expense of all the rest to a recognition of the fact that the happiness of all alike secured by common effort implies the prosperity and contentment of every individual throughout the whole world.

* These are the virtual acknowledgments of Mr. Howell and Mr. Bamberger in their adverse criticism of the principles of late advocated by the International and Social Democracy respectively.

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Whilst admitting, therefore, to use the words of a Quarterly Reviewer,* whom no one will suspect of Socialistic tendencies, that this "germ of good" in Socialism has often been "mixed from the very first with evil elements, which have at times displayed themselves in extraordinary iniquities," we conclude, at the same time, with a caution to our readers from the same pen, as expressing in full our own conviction:

"Never is it right to disdain, but never either ought we to be abjectly subservient to, the great forms in which the spirit of humanity has flowed, and more especially those which continue to dominate and rule men's minds in the present age. These erring forms, if we can but avoid their errors, will teach us much of the lineaments of the true ideal; they are the elements of truth seen distortedly, and from antagonistic points of view; amid the mutual antagonism, we shall find there is yet something in which they harmonise both with each other and with the reality."

* "Quarterly Review," No. 288, Oct. 1877, p. 382.

THE END.

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